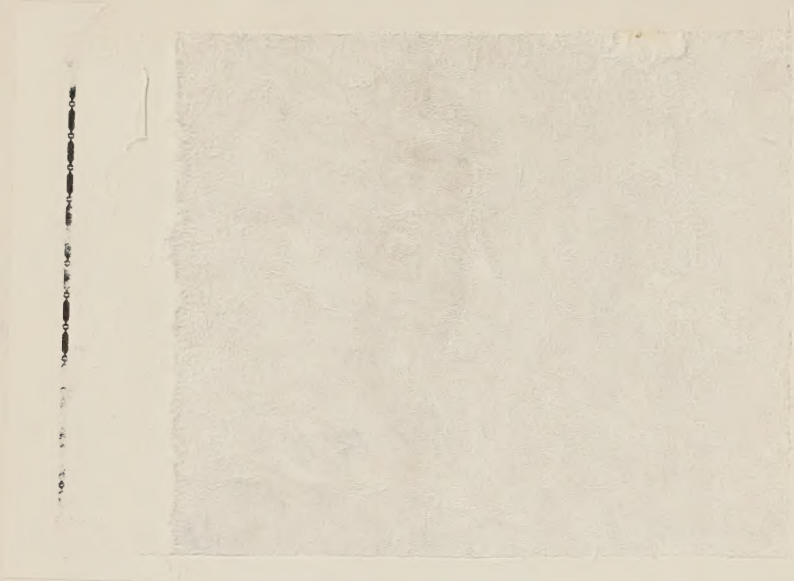

Carrie Rice Library
Campbell College
Buies Creek, NC

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/bwb_W9-DFF-545

Joint Committee on Methods
of Preventing Delinquency

Publication No. 4

Publications of the Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency

50 East 42d Street, New York City

1. The Commonwealth Fund Program for the Prevention of Delinquency. A descriptive pamphlet. 16 pages.
2. Three Problem Children. Narratives from a Child Guidance Clinic. 146 pages. $1.00.
3. Some Extra-Curricular Problems of the Classroom. Bernard Glueck, M.D. 16 pages.
4. The Problem Child in School. Narratives from Case Records of Visiting Teachers. Mary B. Sayles. With a Statement on the Purpose and Scope of Visiting Teacher Work, by Howard W. Nudd. 288 pages. $1.00.
5. The Visiting Teacher Movement. With Special Reference to Administrative Relationships. Julius John Oppenheimer, Ph.D. Second Edition. 206 pages. 75 cents.
6. The Visiting Teacher in Rochester. Mabel Brown Ellis. 204 pages. 75 cents.
7. Directory of Psychiatric Clinics for Children. 50 cents.

The above publications are issued under the auspices of the Commonwealth Fund Program for the Prevention of Delinquency. A statement concerning the Program will be found on page 285.

THE PROBLEM CHILD IN SCHOOL

NARRATIVES FROM CASE RECORDS OF VISITING TEACHERS

By MARY B. SAYLES

WITH A DESCRIPTION OF THE PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF VISITING TEACHER WORK

By HOWARD W. NUDD

NEW YORK
JOINT COMMITTEE ON METHODS OF PREVENTING DELINQUENCY
1925

CARRIE RICH MEMORIAL LIBRARY
CAMPBELL COLLEGE
BUIES CREEK, N. C.

CONTENTS

The Problem Child in School

		PAGE
	FOREWORD	7
I.	PARENTAL ATTITUDES	13
	A Puzzle	16
	An Insecure World	30
	A Misunderstanding in the Making	35
	A Boy and His Father	40
	A Girl and Her Mother	56
II.	FEELINGS OF INFERIORITY	67
	A Show-Off	70
	"Not Bright"	78
	A Struggle Against Odds	82
	Waking Up	93
	The Two Jims	98
	On the Borderline	103
III.	DIVERSE ISSUES	117
	"A Different Boy"	117
	A Lengthened Childhood	122
	"Promoted" to Special	125
	A Little Grandpa	135
IV.	QUESTIONS OF HONESTY	143
	The Easy Way	145
	A Heroine of Romance	149
	Running to Waste	156
	Brothers in Crime	171
	Crooking as a Sport	178
	A First Offender	191
	"Two-Thirds Good"	195
V.	SEX PROBLEMS	209
	"Far Gone"	210
	Supplanted	217
	Rumor and Reputation	230
	A Case of Scare	243
	THE PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF VISITING TEACHER WORK	253

FOREWORD

CHILDREN whose school progress is erratic and puzzling, whose behavior is perplexing, or whose personalities manifest traits that give cause for concern, are to be found in every school. Sometimes these children are unresponsive, repressed or unhappy, sometimes they are serious discipline cases—the trouble frequently constituting more of a challenge to school or parental management than a fault of the child. Whatever the type of difficulty, the past few years have seen a significant change in attitude toward these problems of childhood. Better methods, based upon efforts to understand the child's nature and the factors in his environment which are causing his difficulties, are gradually replacing the older forms of repressive discipline and blind compulsion. It is often found that the problems are due to unsuspected factors for which the home, the school, or neighborhood influences, rather than the child himself, are responsible. Ways are being sought and followed, in the light of this understanding, to give early attention to the difficulties with which such children struggle and to prevent serious problems of scholarship and conduct from developing.

This volume is intended to illustrate some of the common types of problems among school children—problems involving psychological and social factors which, if allowed to persist, frequently lead to serious permanent maladjustment; and to indicate the methods used by the visiting teacher to study and help such children. An increasingly important role in the modern system of public education is being assigned to this new specialist, who is not merely familiar

with educational processes but has been trained in a technique of social service which owes much to modern psychology and psychiatry.

The narratives here presented are derived from case records of visiting teachers at work under the direction of the National Committee on Visiting Teachers as part of the Commonwealth Fund Program for the Prevention of Delinquency. Since a rounded understanding of visiting teacher work could hardly be derived from case narratives alone, Mr. Howard W. Nudd was asked to contribute a statement summarizing the National Committee's conception of the work in its broader aspects, and indicating its underlying philosophy and the professional equipment essential to its proper execution. It is hoped that the book as a whole may prove helpful to the many teachers, parents, and social workers who wish to gain a better knowledge of how school children who present special problems of scholarship or behavior can be understood and helped.

The last impression which this volume aims to convey is that of a wonder-worker who applies a newly discovered panacea. The visiting teacher lays no claim to omniscience; she is not always successful. For that reason several narratives have been included which show her inability, for one reason or another, to straighten out difficulties which had baffled teachers and parents. Many of the problems with which the narratives deal were successfully handled with the cooperation of parents and teachers. Some of them, no doubt, might have been foreseen and prevented by an enlightened teacher or father or mother without the aid of a visiting teacher. Yet the fact remains that with most of the children whose stories are here told, the school group had exhausted their resources before appealing to the visiting teacher; with others the parents were puzzled or quite at

a loss as to how to proceed. It is to be hoped that from the variety of situations presented some understanding is given of the painstaking development of a conscious and transmittable technique which utilizes the processes unconsciously employed in some degree by every successful teacher and parent.

The narratives were prepared by Mary Buell Sayles of the staff of the Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency, which is the division of the Commonwealth Fund Program especially charged with interpreting the methods and results of the Program activities. The cases presented were chosen from several times their number submitted for consideration by the National Committee on Visiting Teachers. The intrinsic interest of the problem, its representative character, the presence in the record of concrete details as to causes and as to methods of treatment, all influenced the choice. The grouping finally assumed by the narratives serves to indicate some of the main issues involved; but it is obvious that many of the stories have aspects which relate them to other groups than those in which they appear. It is hardly necessary to state that all names used are fictitious; in addition such changes in occupations, nationalities, and other background facts were made as seemed necessary to conceal identity. Care was taken, however, to make no alterations which should affect the essential factors in the child's problem or in the relation of school and visiting teacher to it.

The Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency and Miss Sayles gratefully acknowledge the helpful cooperation of the visiting teachers whose case records provide not only the substance of the stories, but much of the language as well. Throughout the preparation of the volume, Miss Jane F. Culbert and others of the executive

staff of the National Committee on Visiting Teachers, and various other members of the personnel of the Commonwealth Fund Program, have devoted much time to reading and helpful criticism of the work. Among these, Dr. Marion E. Kenworthy, medical director of the Bureau of Children's Guidance, gave many hours to careful review of the material from the psychological and psychiatric standpoints. The book as a whole is thus presented to its readers with the sanction of a professional group who have shared in the effort to assure its scientific soundness and its effective presentation.

GRAHAM ROMEYN TAYLOR, *Executive Director*
Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency

I

PARENTAL ATTITUDES

"Mental hygienists are stressing one great point, namely, that in most cases of nervousness, in many cases of delinquency, in some cases of insanity, and in almost all cases of child behavior or conduct disorder, the trail leads inevitably and directly back to the *home* and the *parents*."

GEORGE K. PRATT, M.D., in *A Mental Health Primer*

"This phrase, [the Call of the Cradle] covers a species of 'spoiling' which often is not recognized as such—a drag back towards dependence as opposed to independence, to irresponsibility as opposed to responsibility, towards the ego as opposed to the herd. We spoil a child every time we make dependence, irresponsibility, self-centeredness, unnecessarily easy and attractive. . . . We cannot make the Call of the Cradle too alluring to a child without permanently influencing his character . . ."

H. CRICHTON MILLER, M.D., in
The New Psychology and the Parent

"It seems that older people have grown too far beyond their memories of the world of childhood, with its special limitations and view-points, to appreciate the motivations and weaknesses of that period. The investigator of what really happens, especially in the mental life of the child, comes on a whole host of phenomena which, as guiding forces of juvenile misconduct, are neither known to the guardians of the particular child nor to other observers. There is an astonishing lack of any attempt to get down to the bed-level of causation and analyze out the essential facts as they really exist, so important for treatment."

WILLIAM HEALY, M.D., in *Honesty*

I

PARENTAL ATTITUDES

HOSTS of mothers and fathers already fully realize that the job of being a wise parent is the most important and one of the most difficult anyone can have. To such mothers and fathers, who individually or in child-study groups are seeking to gather in and assimilate everything that will aid them in understanding the mental life of their children, the notion that parental attitudes are among the most powerful and formative influences in young lives is already familiar. Indeed, thus tritely stated, the proposition would hardly be denied by anyone. Yet numberless individual situations surround us which furnish illustrations of types of influence whose very familiarity masks their significance.

Who for example is not acquainted with families in which an only child, a youngest child, or a for-any-reason-especially-adored child forms the center? Departing after a visit to a friendly household, who has not commented upon the way in which Tommy or Barbara is being spoiled? Yet how fully do most of us, onlookers or participators in such situations, appreciate the ramifications and distant outcroppings of spoiling in the life of the child?

The teacher, the primary principal, and—when the school is fortunate enough to possess them—the psychologist and visiting teacher, are in a position to appreciate what some of these outcroppings mean. Here, for example, is a recent comment based upon experience in a school where the efforts of all four types of worker were pooled:

> Nowhere throughout the school organization is it so difficult to form an estimate of a child's ability as in the first grade. There is no accumulation of opinion inherited from a previous teacher. Among the children, there is no uniformity of previous experience. They come from different types of homes and frequently . . . from the environment of another language. The 'spoiling' which many children experience up to school age does not help to prepare them for their first contact with the unknown world of school. . . .[1]

One of the children whose stories are told in this first group is a first grader who has been subjected in her home to the spoiling process. While many other factors doubtless helped to make this child what she was the conclusion is inescapable that we have here one of the major influences which have operated to keep her in a state of infantile dependence at an age when she should be developing into a self-directing human unit.

Spoiling is responsible, however, for only a few of the many types of problems originating in relations between parents and children. The utter dependence of the young child, the complete authority of the parent over him, gradually lose their absolute character with the passing years, so that a continuous process of readjustment between the two generations is necessary if an equilibrium favorable to healthy growth is to be maintained. Along this whole range of relationships, the situations in which the child acts the part of a dependent under the authority of grown-ups are stressed by psychiatrists as closely related to problems of mental health. These issues are frequently the concern of mothers and fathers who aim to play more than the traditional role of provider and protector to their young. If at one end of the scale we have the fond, doting parent and the small child who clings to the privileges of babyhood unconsciously working together to hamper the child's development,

[1] "Fitting the School to the Child," by Elisabeth A. Irwin and Louis A. Marks.

at the other end we have the severe and dictatorial parent, almost equally unconscious of the motives which impel him to bend the growing boy or girl to his authority, and the youngster, impatiently straining at the leash. Unlike in their external manifestations as are these two situations, both are fundamentally traceable to the common human weakness of regarding one's children as a part of one's self and hence as having no right to an independent self-motivating existence.

In the present group, several narratives turn definitely upon this later phase of the authority-dependency relation. One at least of the stories under the group which follows—"A Struggle Against Odds"—is also closely related to this issue. The subject is a complex one which should have more extended discussion than can be given here. Dr. Bernard Glueck has set in a clear light both the causes and some of the end results of maladjustments in these parent-child relationships. "The process of growing up," he points out, "is to a very large extent taken up with the problem of adjusting oneself to the guidance that comes from one or another of the authoritative sources surrounding the child"; and those who have the training of the child in hand should, while recognizing the need of guidance, be "aware at the same time of the dangers of over-guidance and of the fact that an essential element of maturity is a relative freedom from the need for guidance." "A nice balance between the disposition to self-esteem and the tendency to self-abasement" is essential to mental health, and "contact with an unintelligent exhibition of parental authority may and does hamper the individual in the attainment of this nice balance. The pathological deviations may be either in the nature of an oppressive sense of inferiority and a self-depreciating attitude in the face of one's daily problems, or

an ugly, overweening haughtiness of manner which frequently deteriorates into a tyrannical bullying of one's associates or dependents. The over-reaction to an oppressive authoritativeness may also lead to a chronic state of rebellion and active antagonism to all forms of authority."[1]

Family situations which produce the spoiled small child and the repressed or rebellious older child occur with marked frequency in the experience of those who study difficult children. This fact, and the further fact that a change of attitude and method on the parents' part is usually sufficient to correct the difficulty, at least in its earlier stages of development, accounts for the emphasis here given to this group of problems. The opposite type of situation in which indifference and neglect replace spoiling, and laxity in discipline takes the place of over-strictness, is also of course often found, although no examples are included in the present collection. Among the various other types of problem children whose troubles clearly originate in the home, two only are represented in this group: the child who has been deprived of his sense of security by his parents' mistaken attitude, and the child who is being driven to rebellion by a combination of strictness, uncongeniality, and extreme poverty. Each of these stories conveys its own message.

A Puzzle

THELMA NIELSEN had spent six months in school—one week in the regular first grade room, the rest of the time in a special class for children slow to develop—without having once spoken to her teacher or taken part in any class exercise or game. Most of the time she sat with

[1] "Constructive Possibilities of a Mental Hygiene of Childhood," by Bernard Glueck, M.D. *Mental Hygiene*, July 1924, pp. 649–667.

her head on her desk, apparently without the slightest interest in what was going on about her. At other times she permitted herself to be led around by her classmates, who seemed fond of her, and accepted from them gifts of various kinds, products of their hand work or cards on which appeared words which they had recognized in a certain word-naming game.

The teacher in Thelma's class was a kind, sweet, and patient young woman much beloved by her pupils. Thelma, she said, had seemed so very bashful that she had not tried to hurry her into taking part in either work or play. The various approaches she had made to the child had been without result, except that on a few occasions Thelma had consented to point out a word on the blackboard; never yet had she pronounced one. As the child was already eight years old, her teacher felt that no further time should be lost, and called to her aid the new visiting teacher, Miss Earl.

Regarding Thelma's family the teacher knew only that her mother brought her to school and called for her, always waiting outside until the child appeared.

Thelma was of average size for her age, with fair hair and dull blue eyes. She was always neatly, even tastefully dressed. Her skin was pale and seemed abnormally cool for that of a child.

The school nurse reported that Thelma had bad tonsils and pains in her legs, called by the family "growing pains." She had been out of school for several weeks lately, under medical care for these pains. No physical examination had been made since her return. Psychological examination had been rendered impossible by the child's attitude.

Her teacher was sure that Thelma would not leave the room with Miss Earl. To circumvent this difficulty and put their first meeting on a casual social basis, the visiting

teacher invited two friendly little girls in the same class to bring the child to her room. There a story was told and lively conversation ensued, touching upon many subjects. Thelma seemed interested, but spoke no word. However, she presently began to nod her head in response to questions.

Next came a visit to the home, carefully timed for a Sunday afternoon so that the father as well as the mother might be seen. Thelma was sitting on the steps with an older girl from next door. When asked if her mother was at home she rose instantly, saying in a perfectly natural manner, "Yes, I'll go call her." She soon returned with Mrs. Nielsen, to whom the visiting teacher introduced herself as coming from the school. When next Miss Earl addressed the child she was met by the usual stone wall of silence. Her conclusion was that at first she had not been recognized, and had thus caught a glimpse of the ordinary home manner of her charge.

This impression was strengthened by the account given by Mr. and Mrs. Nielsen. The parents, both of whom had been born in Denmark, were middle-aged, and their other children were grown or half-grown. Miss Earl learned that Thelma's birth had been normal and that she had begun to walk and to talk early. She was very active at home, and her father said that she sometimes talked to him in so grown-up a fashion that he was astonished. Both parents were sure that there was no trouble except bashfulness.

When asked about Thelma's health the mother stated that the child had been under the care of a doctor whose name she could not recall. He had given her cod liver oil, had said that her tonsils were all right and that she would outgrow the pains in her legs.

The home was rather a poor one. Mr. Nielsen was a baker. He seemed somewhat overbearing, his wife corre-

spondingly meek and repressed. Both appeared fond of their little girl.

Upon leaving the home the visiting teacher walked over to the house next door, where Thelma was sitting on the porch.

"Will you go for a ride with me, Thelma?" she asked.

The child's face lighted up, but she made no motion to accept.

Miss Earl turned to the older girl with whom Thelma had been playing and included her in the invitation. Soon both children were settled beside her in the car.

Thelma seemed to enjoy the ride, but did not once speak during it. Later, in conversation with the other girl, Miss Earl learned without resorting to questions that Thelma was a frequent visitor at her house and would sometimes get down books and point out words in them that she knew.

A few days after this the visiting teacher called at Thelma's room.

"Could I find a little helper here?" she asked.

After considering various children she selected Thelma. The child rose instantly and accompanied her from the room. She was led about the building on various errands, was present at talks with several children, and when addressed responded with nods.

Presently it became necessary to make some calls. Miss Earl placed Thelma beside her, remarking as she started the car, "Now, Thelma, I must watch the road, so if you want me to understand you, you'll have to speak out loud."

After looking up a few times to see whether she was observed, the child broke into a flood of talk—about valentines, her sister and her sister's friend, the car this friend owned, the plants they had in the window at home, and all sorts of sights observed along the way. Both the substance

and the manner of her conversation were entirely natural and childlike. Her enunciation was good, her fund of information seemed to this experienced teacher equal to that of the average eight-year-old.

Miss Earl had discovered at the beginning of her acquaintance with the child that any attempt to draw her out about school matters increased her embarrassment. However, during this ride Thelma referred once, spontaneously, to her first experience in the regular grade the previous fall. Her big sister had brought her, and she had hated it. Asked why, she said there were some bad boys who hit her and hurt her. Nothing more in the way of information on this topic was forthcoming then or later.

The visiting teacher noted that on their return to school Thelma's hand was quite warm, but that when one of the teachers, meeting them in the hall, spoke to the child, it became cold.

On the same day an attractively illustrated reader was obtained and an attempt made to interest Thelma in its contents. The child seemed to make some slight effort, less from interest, apparently, than from desire to please her new friend. She showed pleasure, however, when her teacher gave her permission to take the book home. Later Mrs. Nielsen reported that the youngster would sit for hours poring over the book, though apparently she was unable to distinguish any words.

From this point on, satisfactory rapport was established between Thelma and the visiting teacher; but it was still some time before the child's willingness to talk to one adult in the school group extended itself to others.

Meanwhile Miss Earl again visited the Nielsen home. This time she talked with Thelma's married sister as well as with her mother. The sister was intelligent and friendly;

she had already come to the conclusion that the child's condition was serious, had done her best to make the parents appreciate the fact, and had taken Thelma to see her own physician in the suburb where she lived. It appeared that he attributed the pains and the peculiar cold numbness from which the child suffered to the condition of her tonsils. This cold numbness had been noticeable for about two years, and for a similar period Thelma had been subject, when displeased, to violent tantrums in which she kicked, screamed, and threw things about. She also showed much selfishness in her relations with other children. She had manifested a particular antagonism to the physicians to whom she had been taken; in the course of repeated visits she had never spoken to either one, and several times had nearly gone into spasms in their offices. Under these circumstances the question of surgical intervention in her case was naturally a difficult one.

It was clear to Miss Earl that one thing Thelma needed was to be encouraged to greater independence. She explained this need to the mother, urging that the child be permitted to go to school alone, for example.

A further suggestion offered at this time was that Thelma be taken to see a psychiatrist, Dr. Graves; Miss Earl was anxious to avail herself of the best professional advice obtainable. Mrs. Nielsen was quite willing to have this done, but doubted whether the visiting teacher could persuade the child to go.

A few days later Miss Earl took Thelma to visit her own office downtown, and by special arrangement Dr. Graves, whose office was next door, dropped in while she was there. The informality of the meeting caught the child off guard, and for the first time she showed a willingness to answer questions in the presence of a third person. Though she

would not speak to Dr. Graves she responded by nods to his questions, and displayed none of the shrinking usually shown toward strangers. Conversation being impossible, Dr. Graves endeavored to establish himself in the child's good graces by drawing pictures for her, a process which she watched with interest. His advice was that no attempt should be made to force verbal responses from her, that instead an effort be made to draw her out through activities such as drawing, painting, and especially dancing.

A visit to a class in interpretive dancing for children was the next experiment tried. Though the visiting teacher danced with the youngsters Thelma could not be persuaded to leave her seat. However she was greatly interested, and on the way home talked freely about the different dances, expressing a desire to take part in them. Miss Earl arranged with the girl next door to take Thelma to the dancing class the following week. This second occasion, however, brought no more encouraging results than the first.

Miss Earl's efforts to develop a more independent spirit in Thelma did not end with her suggestions to the mother. From her study of the school situation she had concluded that the children's custom of giving cards they had won and objects they had made to Thelma was encouraging the child in her passivity and dependence on others. Moreover the element of pity in their attitude toward her could hardly fail to react upon Thelma by producing in her a feeling of inferiority to them. The need was clearly to get the child started in doing things for herself, and to make much of each small accomplishment until she should begin to experience a sense of achievement. As a first step Miss Earl advised that a stop be put to the children's custom of giving cards they had won and objects they had made to Thelma. How far the cessation of these unearned donations may have

affected the child, how far other measures taken may have served to wake her up, cannot be estimated. Certain changes in her demeanor, however, began to be apparent.

In the first place, on several occasions she actually answered questions addressed to her by her teacher and by the principal. Then she joined in one or two games—first that of guessing words on cards, then a playground game. Though these beginnings of participation were slight and tentative, they marked an important departure from her previous wholly passive state. On one occasion when the children were writing at the board one little girl proved unable to form a letter as directed by the teacher. Miss Earl thereupon took Thelma's hand and guiding it formed the letter several times. She then remarked, "See how well you made this letter, and you see you are helping the teacher, for you can show Lucy how to make it." Thelma beamed. A week later she voluntarily took her place in the reading group, and when another child was unable to name certain words, supplied several of them, evidently taking pleasure in the thought that she was helping.

Feeling that Thelma had begun to find herself in the group, Miss Earl arranged for a second interview with Dr. Graves; she wanted to see whether he would find evidence of the improvement that she believed had taken place, and whether he could offer any further suggestions. He found the child decidedly improved. She permitted herself to be left alone with him and even answered several of his questions. His advice was the same as on the previous occasion.

Miss Earl felt that she had now reached a point where she could venture an attempt to have Thelma examined physically. Experience had taught her that such an examination is a most important step to the understanding of behavior problems. If the primary source of the trouble be

physical, efforts to overcome it by other approaches may be wasted or worse; if no medical issue be involved, assurance that such is the case opens the way for concentrated attack upon the problem of personality. She therefore obtained the parents' consent, made arrangements at a children's clinic for the examination, and one Saturday morning called for the child.

Thelma was in bed, enjoying a customary week-end privilege of sleeping late. The visiting teacher sat by while she was taken up and prepared for the day. The child displayed much temper, hitting at her mother and trying to interfere with every movement made toward dressing her. This behavior was evidently an every-day occurrence; Mrs. Nielson admitted that Thelma was exceedingly stubborn and difficult to manage, and always had her own way in the home; she was very finicky about her food, it appeared, refusing milk, eggs, and meat. Throughout the scene Miss Earl maintained the attitude that Thelma was of course going to be dressed so that she could go out with the visiting teacher who was expecting her assistance. The storm did not subside, however, until Mrs. Nielsen remarked to Miss Earl that Thelma had a beautiful new dress. Instantly the tears vanished from the child's eyes and she demanded that her mother go get the dress and show it to the visiting teacher. When the charming little frock had been displayed and exclaimed over, Thelma issued a second command: "Go get her my other pink dress." By the time this dress also had been admired she was ready to go with the visiting teacher, and set off willingly.

This scene cast a new light upon the child's personality and the probable origin of her behavior difficulties. Her peculiarities, it now seemed, might be largely due to spoiling at home. Even her attitude in school might in part be ex-

plained by a stubborn determination to follow up her first reaction of dislike by refusing to share in activities.

At the clinic Thelma and the visiting teacher were promptly admitted to the pleasant and informal looking office of Dr. Ayres. The physician had been fully informed as to the character of the problem, and when Thelma attempted to resist his use of the stethoscope, he went calmly on, whereupon she subsided and permitted him to make a thorough examination. Once or twice she turned to the visiting teacher with tears in her eyes to ask, "Can't we go home?" She was assured that they were going in a few minutes, and continued to submit.

The findings of the examination were entirely negative. Thelma was slightly overweight, her posture was good, and no evidence of defective circulation or of bad tonsils or adenoids was discovered. The physician considered her physically normal, and believed the cause of her difficulties to be "a psychological one, her timidness toward strangers, etc., being entirely mental." He was inclined to believe that a great deal of the trouble might result from pampering in the home. The emotional side of her make-up was evidently not developing normally.

The possibility that physical causes might be responsible for Thelma's peculiarities thus eliminated, the visiting teacher could resume her attack upon the child's personality problem with renewed hope and confidence.

Later on the same day, in private conversation with the mother, Miss Earl explained the outcome of the examination and tried to put over to her the importance of not waiting upon Thelma and indulging her so much, the need of making the child understand that she could not get her own way by fits of temper. Mrs. Nielsen agreed; she felt that Thelma's teacher could change the child's attitude if once she could

make her understand that she was not to have her own way in the classroom.

The school record of progress from this time to the end of the year is a clear one. Certain steps in it are of sufficient interest to warrant relating in detail.

After leaving the clinic, Miss Earl took occasion to explain to Thelma why the visit had been made:

"You see, Thelma, your teacher has been thinking you were a sick child all this time because you have sat with your head upon the desk and have done nothing in the room that you were supposed to do. I am very glad to find you are perfectly well, but you see you must convince your teacher that you are well. If the teacher keeps telling me that you are sick and that you do not do your school work and sit with your head down upon your desk, what can I do? . . ."

From that day on Thelma sat up in her seat and appeared to take vastly more interest in classroom doings. How far the assurance that she was perfectly well influenced her, how far she was moved by the desire to avoid further visits to the doctor's office, who shall say? Both possibilities had been in the visiting teacher's mind when she made the explanation quoted above.

As a means to the same general end of inducing the child to take her part in activities, Miss Earl carried on a campaign to bring Thelma to regard herself as just like any other child in the room so far as responsibility and ability were concerned. Her teacher was urged to work toward this end and Miss Earl herself, in all her visits to the room, made a point of paying as much attention to other children as she did to Thelma. When she wished to develop the child through using her as a messenger she was careful to use another youngster in this way first. She took pains to ask

the teachers in the building to treat Thelma just as they would any other child coming with a note or message. When she wished to inspect Thelma's drawings, she went straight down the row, commenting on the work of each child in turn.

She also, when she had the child alone, approached the point directly. Thus on one occasion she said:

"You know, Thelma, you are like any other child in that room, but sometimes you seem to think that you are not. You have a strong well body and good eyes and good hands, you are so clean and wear such pretty dresses. You are just like all the children in the room, but Thelma, I am afraid the teacher will think you are lazy because you let the other children do all of the work in the room while you sit there doing nothing so much of the time."

That these devices and others more or less similar were largely responsible for the results achieved in this case seems beyond question. By the end of the year Thelma was taking part in all the activities of her class, reading, writing, drawing, and weaving with the rest, and was showing a lively interest, particularly in the hand work. There was, of course, no possibility of promoting her. Since her relations with the teacher were happy, and the varied opportunities offered seemed to be meeting her needs and giving her the sense of achievement so essential for normal growth, it was determined to let her continue work in this special class in the fall. No one who has observed her—teacher, psychiatrist or other physician—has ever believed the youngster to be subnormal mentally.

Three months after the opening of school, the following year, Thelma was still making progress. There had indeed been renewed evidences of passivity during the first weeks, especially on the playground: during the recesses the child would sit and watch her classmates play without making

any move to take part. One day the visiting teacher took her by the hand, led her to the slide, and told her to climb up. She wept, but did as directed, and since then has continued regularly to use the slide. She is learning to read, and "fairly glows" when allowed to read to Miss Earl; she also writes, sews, does basketry, etc., with her class. When the visiting teacher takes her about, sends her with messages to teachers, and so on, as she continues to do in the effort to broaden her experience and develop self-confidence, Thelma shows a decided gain in her manner of meeting people; she now shakes hands, says how-do-you-do, and delivers messages intelligently.

Altogether the gains made by the child during the past nine months seem remarkable; yet those who study her do not feel that they can yet relax the special efforts they have been making to bring her out. Her response to strangers is still far below that which she makes to the visiting teacher, and Miss Earl therefore feels that a psychological examination made even now would not give a fair estimate of the child's real ability. She continues to see Thelma regularly and hopes that by the end of the present year the child may have been brought up to the standard for her age.

* * *

Clearly a more precise definition of the causes of Thelma's personality difficulties is desirable; so far as we are able to judge, spoiling in the home was the dominant factor. Had a psychiatrist experienced in work with children been available and able to give the necessary time to a study of this child's problem, the visiting teacher might have obtained a larger measure of help; from such brief contacts as were here made little was to be expected, however great the skill of the consultant. The story as it stands shows how much may be

accomplished by one who combines the techniques of teacher and social worker with native tact and a gift for dealing with children. Whether Thelma's gain thus far will lead on to a permanently satisfactory school adjustment no one can predict with certainty. We are not sure that the fundamental causes have been reached and modified, but all the evidence available indicates that Thelma's difficulties were of emotional origin, and the fact that so many of her peculiarities have yielded to mental influences makes it probable that the line being followed is wisely chosen.

Readers of the literature of personality problems in young children will see many points of resemblance between Thelma's behavior at home and that of other youngsters of her age. Tantrums, food fads, and obstinacy are not uncommon characteristics, and a fairly definite technique for dealing with these manifestations is being evolved.[1] One should not, however, lose sight of the fact that physical causes may lie at the root of such behavior, and on the other hand that it may be traceable to painful experiences in the child's life with which no one has thought of connecting it. The most thorough possible study of the situation ought therefore always to be made.

Thelma's school behavior with its passivity and complete absence of outbursts of any sort forms an odd contrast to her behavior at home; the relation between the two is somewhat obscure. The teacher of the regular first-grade room in which the child spent her initial week of school was a rather stern and formal person who might well strike terror to the heart of an over-sensitive youngster accustomed to being

[1] Parents who are struggling with such problems will find much valuable suggestion in the publications of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, especially in the leaflets entitled "Habit Training for Children," prepared by Dr. Douglas A. Thom. Those who wish to go more deeply into the subject will find help in the pamphlet, "Habit Clinics for the Child of Preschool Age," also by Dr. Thom, recently issued by the U. S. Children's Bureau.

babied and made much of at home. We have also Thelma's own story of having been "hit" by some "bad boys" while in this room. The visiting teacher is inclined to believe that much in the child's later behavior may be accounted for by her having been badly frightened during that first week.

However this may be, the skill with which a newcomer versed in the psychology of childhood converts passivity into active participation in classroom doings is well worth studying. Work through the mother in the home is naturally more difficult, since here far deeper ruts of habit have been worn in both parents and child. Yet the overcoming of Thelma's bad food habits and tendency to dominate by displays of temper, the enriching of her experience, and the establishment in her of capacity for independent thought and action are all essentials to her normal development which can hardly be compassed without the cooperation of her parents. Nothing less than complete emancipation of this child from the shackles of early habit is the visiting teacher's goal.

An Insecure World

ELSIE LAMB was a pretty child of twelve, with wide blue eyes and a shock of fair hair. Her teacher in the lower sixth grade said that she was bright enough, but just wouldn't apply her mind. "A nuisance in the school room," Miss Grey called her; "she is capable of doing the work but doesn't try. She won't work unless someone is standing over her. She disturbs the whole room with her foolishness."

So it came about that Elsie was sent to call on the visiting teacher, Miss Jones.

It was a very serious interview. The child cried and

promised to do better. She appeared greatly distressed, and sincere in her statement of good intentions.

Miss Jones led the conversation to pleasanter topics. It appeared that Elsie had a passion for animals. She took care of the chickens at home, and knew the life history of each one; and there were kittens, three of them, who lived with their mother in the woodshed. What she wanted most, though, was a dog. She sighed; her parents wouldn't consent to her having one. She was the only child in the house.

The home, visited a few days later by Miss Jones, proved to be a comfortable old-fashioned house, set in a large yard, in a good residence district. Mr. Lamb had inherited it only the year before from his father. He had also taken over the real estate business in which he had been associated for years with his father.

Mrs. Lamb was a slight, dark woman, who appeared somewhat nervous and suspicious, and was decidedly on the defensive as regards Elsie. She evidently felt relieved when she learned that the visiting teacher had not brought any fresh complaints from the school. She thought she had been too indulgent with Elsie in earlier years, and had recently been trying to make up by great strictness, hardly letting the child out of sight of the house, and punishing her every time she was even a few minutes late in coming home from school.

In this conversation no reference was made to a fact that Miss Jones had learned the day before from a former teacher of Elsie's—the fact that the child was adopted.

When the principal had referred Elsie to Miss Jones, in November, he had, of course, given her a full report about the child's work and conduct. This report also stated that the school physician had found her to be in good health, and that the school psychologist's tests showed her to have average intelligence. Elsie's record in a former school, which she had

attended until this year, was now looked up. She had been a problem all through school though her attendance record had been good. Both the former principal and the child's last teacher had found her very trying, but had managed to gain some influence over her before the end of the year. They had considerable difficulty in regard to her attitude toward the boys.

Miss Jones, who was now seeing Elsie regularly once a week, talked with her next time she saw her about this point, telling her that her mind was like a garden and that she was letting the weeds crowd out the good plants.

Four weeks after Elsie was referred to the visiting teacher, however, her room teacher's weekly report indicated that she was still giving a lot of trouble. So Miss Jones arranged with Mrs. Lamb to call after school, and walked home with Elsie. The child was pleased to have her do so, telling the other girls that she couldn't play with them as she had "important business" on hand.

Mrs. Lamb was not at home, but had left a request that the visitor await her return, so Miss Jones sat down to chat with an elderly aunt of Mrs. Lamb's who made her home with the family. She noticed that Elsie appeared very fond of the old lady, also that she handled very tenderly the kittens which she brought in to exhibit.

Presently the child went out, and it was possible to lead the conversation to her early history. Mrs. Eaton said that nothing was known about Elsie's parents; she had been left on the Lamb's doorstep when only a few weeks old. She was "a darling baby," and the Lambs had become very much attached to her; but as she grew older they were constantly reminded by their friends that she might develop some hereditary traits that would disgrace the family. Mrs. Eaton herself had brought up a girl who married at sixteen

without her consent and she felt that this was a warning to her niece and nephew. As a result of all this pressure the Lambs had become suspicious in their attitude toward the child and had felt it their duty to be severe. They had attempted to control her largely by reminding her that she was not their own child and that they would not keep her unless she was good. She had responded by threatening to run away, which to their minds only strengthened the theory that a bad heredity was coming out. Mrs. Eaton spoke gloomily of the child's future, but at the same time showed a great deal of affection for her.

Here was a not uncommon situation whose dangers were at once apparent to one trained in child psychology.

Relying upon the aunt's evident affection for Elsie, Miss Jones ventured to suggest that the family were placing grave difficulties in the girl's way. Pursued by the fear that the only parents she had ever known might cast her out, how could she be expected to settle down and do good school work or behave satisfactorily? Children seldom thrive in an insecure world, a world where fear and suspicion rule.

Mrs. Eaton was much struck by this idea and agreed that the situation was not fair to Elsie. She showed, indeed, a remarkably quick comprehension of the issue involved, and reproached herself for her share in the mistake which she felt had been made.

The mother did not return, and in view of her obvious sensitiveness as shown on the first visit, Miss Jones decided to leave to the aunt the responsibility for getting the new point of view over to the parents. This Mrs. Eaton gladly undertook to do.

Also, before she left, Miss Jones arranged to have a report sent home every evening by Elsie's teacher on her school

day, Mrs. Lamb to sign and send it back by Elsie the following morning.

This interview with the aunt marked the turn of the tide. Next week Elsie's teacher reported her "very slow in work," but "a little better" in behavior; the following week her work was "a little better," her conduct "better"; the third week the report read "Discipline improved wonderfully. Working"; and from then on the jottings show encouraging progress, until four months after she first came to the visiting teacher we read, "Work and conduct satisfactory."

Not that everything was accomplished in that one interview. Naturally Elsie's room teacher kept on endeavoring to do her best with the child, and the visiting teacher saw her from time to time, taking her on one occasion to the library for help in history, and on another, when her English had been reported poor, discussing her work with her at some length. One day in February Miss Jones had a particularly satisfactory interview with the girl, who of her own accord repeated the substance of the visiting teacher's little talk in the fall about her mind being like a garden.

Most important of all, probably, was the changed attitude of the parents. It was in March, about the time of that fine report last quoted, that Mrs. Lamb telephoned to the visiting teacher to thank her for suggesting a better way of handling Elsie. She was most cordial and grateful. Mr. Lamb, too, dropped in at the school one day and talked with the principal about how noticeably the child had improved during the past few months. Evidently the method of reward as contrasted with threatened punishment was being tried, for Elsie reported that she had been promised a collie pup at the end of the year if she succeeded in qualifying for junior high. She was being promoted to the upper sixth grade and was determined to make a good record in the second semester.

April brought still further advance. Elsie had her name on the honor roll as the third best worker in her class. She was very proud of her record, and would not go home at night without the report for her mother. Occasionally Mrs. Lamb would write some comment on the note when returning it, and Elsie was always most careful to see that the teacher read what her mother had written.

At the end of this month, during vacation week, Elsie appeared at Miss Jones' house on what she called "very important business." She thought she could keep up her record better if she made a special point of reporting to the visiting teacher once a week, and it was agreed that she should come to the office on Friday afternoons. She and her father had selected the coveted puppy, now only a week old, and she was anxious to make sure that there should be no slips before the end of the year. She was enjoying school, she said.

The visiting teacher concludes that "Elsie's present satisfaction in school comes from the fact that she is having an entirely new thrill. She is being notably *good* instead of notably *bad*, and she evidently finds this a very pleasing experience."

A Misunderstanding in the Making

HUGH HOLDEN was referred to the visiting teacher by his own mother.

"You'll have no more trouble with the little boys now I'm home again, I promise you. It's Hugh who is our great problem; I wish you would help us with him. We can't manage him. He doesn't come home directly from school, stays out late at night, chums with Frank Connor and his

crowd—and they have been accused of stealing. He has played truant. He talks very little at home. I feel that we haven't his confidence."

A visit had been paid to Mrs. Holden because the school had become disturbed about the unkempt, dirty condition of her two younger boys and their irregular attendance. She had been away from home for several weeks, it appeared—had been called to the bed-side of a desperately sick mother in another state. Her husband, in her absence, had been unable to cope with the six children and the housekeeping. But now she was at home again, ready to take up her responsibilities. Then, encouraged by Miss Gordon's friendly, understanding attitude, she suddenly opened up regarding her oldest son, her one anxiety.

Mrs. Holden was a wholesome-looking, intelligent woman, of distinctly higher type than one would expect to find in the rather ramshackle little four-room house on the outskirts of a poor section of town where the family lived. The surroundings were somewhat depressing, especially in the midst of a January thaw like the present one, when the road was a veritable sea of mud. Mr. Holden, who was a mason and small contractor, had obtained possession of the house in the course of some deal of the preceding fall, and from motives of economy the family had moved into it, leaving a larger and pleasanter rented home. It had been a disappointment, but business was poor, and with six children already here and a seventh coming soon . . .

About Hugh: he was nearly fourteen, and in the sixth grade at school. Until the last few months he had caused his parents no anxiety, indeed he had been a source of pride to them, for friends had often congratulated them on his fine appearance and intelligence. Then, in this new neighborhood, he had become involved with a tough crowd.

One day the corner grocer had come to the house to say that his cellar had been raided and that he suspected Hugh of having a hand in the affair. The rumor spread so that the mother felt none of the neighbors now trusted the boy or would employ him. No special complaints regarding him had come from the school but his irregular hours were causing his parents much anxiety. He had been a member of a Boy Scout troop but got into the habit of not coming home after meetings until 11 or 12 o'clock at night, so that his father and mother became worried about the way he was spending his time and forbade his going. Mrs. Holden thought it might be well for him to have a job in the afternoons and on Saturdays. He complained, she said, that his parents did not give him enough freedom.

Inquiry at the school brought the information that Hugh was well liked by principal and teachers. He was bright, according to them, though his standing would be much better if he would apply himself harder and attend more regularly; he had recently been promoted on condition. To the visiting teacher, who found occasion to meet him, he appealed as an intelligent, attractive boy, with pleasant manners and rather a fine face. His look was straightforward, his bearing independent; she felt at once a confidence in him.

Hugh said he would like to return to the Scouts. The master of his troup was interviewed; he would be glad to have the boy back, though his scout work before he dropped out had not been good. Hugh would also be very glad if a job could be found for him.

Reviewing what she knew of the situation, the visiting teacher came to the conclusion that the parents' loss of pride and confidence in their son and their consequent mismanagement of him had caused him, in turn, to lose his

faith and pride in them. He felt they were unjust to him, and finding conditions at home unpleasant, stayed away as much as possible.

With the definite aim of counteracting these various tendencies Miss Gordon visited the home again, a few days later. Mrs. Holden was not well, was feeling discouraged, and welcomed the chance to talk things over. She seldom went out and was ashamed to have any of her old friends come to see her in the present home. She talked more fully than before of Mr. Holden's method of handling Hugh, of the severe whippings he administered and his habit of disparaging the boy, all of which she felt had produced its natural result in Hugh's uncommunicativeness at home.

This confirmation of Miss Gordon's theory about the causes at work strengthened her purpose, and she devoted herself to putting over to the mother an appreciation of the good opinion in which the boy was held in school, the good work he was doing, and the fact that everybody liked him. It was easy to see that Mrs. Holden was pleased and cheered by this report. The confidence in her son which had been almost destroyed began to revive as this new friend pointed out his strong points.

Miss Gordon told, also, of the efforts she and the principal were making to find after-school work for Hugh. It appeared, however, that prospects for a boy under fourteen were not promising.

There had been no trouble at all in persuading Mrs. Holden to give her consent to Hugh's rejoining the Scouts, nor was there any difficulty, next day, in obtaining from the boy the assurance that he would go straight home from the meetings and from school. He expressed himself as determined, also, to work hard and make good his condition.

Within a few days there came a report from the principal

that Mr. Holden had come in to see him for the purpose of expressing his desire to cooperate with the school. He took upon himself a great deal of the blame for the children's non-attendance and tardiness, and declared that there would be no more trouble of the kind. His cordial attitude was apparently a response to the school's friendliness expressed by the visiting teacher—though he knew her only through the report of his wife.

From this time on Hugh's record in school steadily improved. Inquiry of his scout master revealed that he was also doing good scout work. The visiting teacher did not succeed in finding him a job, but his father gave him work in connection with a new undertaking of his own. Hugh improved in personal appearance and cleanliness almost as much as in his studies, and became so interested in school that he was greatly disappointed when, in the early spring, he was obliged to miss a few days on account of a suspicion of contagious disease in one of the other children of the family. His mother had no further trouble of any sort with him. Before the close of the year he had become the pride of his teachers and had been chosen by his class to represent them on the school council.

* * *

Hugh Holden's is obviously a rather simple case. But how many of the grave problems that perplex probation officers, psychiatric clinics, and social workers, originate in just such a family situation? Again and again, as we trace back the history of this or that disorder of conduct—persistent truancy, running away from home, even stealing—we find its roots in parental suspicions, over-severity, and nagging, in the bitterness felt because a boy has fallen below a certain standard, in the unwillingness of parents to trust their

growing sons with a growing measure of confidence. The danger in leading a boy or girl to feel that one offense spells final moral ruin, that because he has taken a downward step he is sure to go to the bottom, can hardly be overstated. The turning point in Hugh's story, as the visiting teacher sees it, was the point at which his parents were led to appreciate that their boy was found by other observers worthy of liking, of trust, even of a little admiration. The chance they gave him to reinstate himself in their good graces was quickly seized, and what threatened to develop into a fixed grudge attitude in the boy was as quickly dissolved.

A Boy and His Father

MIKE ROMANO was a boy who had long been a problem in the classroom. For years the school had realized that his home was responsible for his difficulties, without thereby being aided to adjust those difficulties. Thus in September when the visiting teacher was assigned to the school he was one of the first children for whom her services were sought.

Miss Earl found the boy—a handsome ten-year-old youngster—sitting idly in the principal's office where he had already spent the better part of two days. The principal had long ago decided that this was the most effective measure of dealing with Mike when his teacher sent him from the room for annoying her. Her idea was that in time he grew weary of doing nothing and was ready to behave. Just how many days' schooling he had lost through this disciplinary process no one had figured up.

The visiting teacher was at once struck not only by the boy's beauty—he was of true Italian type, with large dark

eyes and curly black hair—but by an air about him which suggested that he was something of a personage. He looked decidedly sulky, but by no means dull. When she talked with him she found him active mentally and physically, but without interest in school or in any wholesome outside activity. He was bitter against his home. His father, he said, beat him every night for nothing at all, hated him, would let him die if he were ill. On the other hand the boy asserted, "I have lots of friends." This proved to be true. He was a natural leader.

The first move of the visiting teacher, after this brief snatch of an interview, was to have the boy return to his room so that she might observe him in class. She also learned all she could, from principal and teachers, about his school history.

It appeared that when Mike entered the lower first grade a teacher was in charge who expected the children to sit perfectly still and not indulge in activity of any sort. Mike did not fit into this role; his superabundant energies made him irrepressible. The teacher declared him to be the "most uncivilized child" she had ever met, and this reputation had followed him ever since. From the first grade to the fourth, where he now was, there had been no abatement in the seriousness of the problem he presented.

His new teacher, Miss Taylor, was already being driven to desperation with the boy's habit of talking out loud on all occasions and with his ever-varying pranks in the classroom. To be sure, many of these were, in essence, mere harmless mischief. For example, recently when the class had been working with paste Mike had looked over his shoulder, on being nudged by the child behind him, and seeing the other youngster's half-opened mouth in close proximity had abruptly yielded to the impulse to daub it

full of the soft mass in his hands. The uproar that followed had been none the less upsetting because the act originated in a mere vagrant impulse, not in deep-laid villainy.

It was also true that Mike had a bad temper, and that he seemed to take delight in plaguing his teacher, though he declared he did not dislike her. When she tried the experiment of paying no attention to his trick of talking out loud, he rapped on his desk. His ingenuity in wrong-doing seemed inexhaustible.

A few days after her first talk with Mike, Miss Earl planned an afternoon expedition with him. She had discovered that he was wild to learn to swim, so first of all she took him down to the high-school swimming pool. However, the pool proved to be so deep that Mike was afraid to trust himself in it.

From the high school the two went together to the Romano home. The family occupied a comfortable house of seven rooms, well-furnished and clean, with a yard. The street, however, was in a crowded district, and swarmed with children.

Mike's mother was an attractive Italian woman. She appeared to have very little control over her children and complained of their noise. She did not like America because the children here do not mind as they do in Italy. Mike, she declared, was a terrible boy; they had to beat him and frighten him with threats of the police to make him behave.

Mike, coming back into the room after an absence, talked most disrespectfully to his mother. He insisted that she told lies about him. Furthermore, he asserted that his parents gave him nothing, but gave everything to Rosita, his eight-year-old sister. The visiting teacher stopped him in his tirade. Nice American boys, she explained firmly, do not talk so to their mothers.

Reviewing her knowledge of Mike and his situation, as gathered in these first brief contacts, Miss Earl came to certain tentative conclusions. Apparently the boy had never been properly handled at home. He had an uncontrolled temper, and was constantly irritated by the home treatment. This irritation carried over to the school. He had discovered that he could make the life of his teacher miserable and was finding amusement in doing so. Miss Earl suspected, also, that his school work was too easy. Recreational opportunities in the neighborhood were apparently not of the best.

What was needed, she felt, was to change the attitude of the boy's parents, to help him control his temper, to guide him into better use of his leisure time, and, perhaps, to make a school adjustment.

Her next move was to visit the Y. M. C. A. With the head of the boys' department she arranged to have Mike join a club which met every Saturday night and which included swimming among its activities. Then she persuaded his mother to let him join, and to furnish the necessary twenty-five cents a month for dues. Miss Earl was to call on the following Saturday and take Mike to the club for the first time.

With the carrying out of this program fate intervened on two successive Saturdays. On the first Saturday the visiting teacher arrived at the home only to find that Mrs. Romano had packed Mike off to a picture show to get rid of him, he had bothered her so with his noise. Miss Earl tried to make the mother see that she was encouraging the boy in his badness, was rewarding him for being bad.

Another difficulty reported by Mrs. Romano was that Mike did not want to go to the club in his old clothes. This point the visiting teacher felt was a real one. Her observa-

tions in the home had convinced her that there was no need of Mike's being so shabby. The father owned his own grocery store, Rosita was taking music lessons, and the other children were better dressed than Mike. She therefore said frankly to Mrs. Romano that she thought the boy should have some new clothes. Evidently her advice was heeded, for a few days later Mike appeared in new trousers and shirt. Soon after this he asked of his own accord if he might go to the club the following Saturday, a sign of interest for which Miss Earl had decided to wait rather than urge him further to join.

Still another revelation made by Mike's mother to the visiting teacher on the occasion of one of these calls was that recently the boy, after visiting a five-and-ten cent store with some friends, had brought home a tiny automobile which he admitted stealing. His father had beaten him "until the blood came," but had done nothing about paying for the trinket. Mrs. Romano wanted Miss Earl to frighten Mike with threats of jail.

Instead, Miss Earl arranged to call to see the father on the following day, Sunday. When she arrived he had gone off to spend the afternoon. Nothing daunted, she went with Mike on Monday to his father's store, obtained from Mr. Romano the money to pay for the automobile, accompanied Mike to the five-and-ten, and encouraged him to make restitution.

The following Sunday Miss Earl again called at the Romano home. This time she found Mr. Romano in, and had a serious talk with him. Well versed in the workings of the parental mind, she began by commenting upon Mike's good qualities—his fine appearance and intelligence, his faculty for making friends. She expressed the opinion that his father would be proud of him some day, that he was a

born leader. Then came the inevitable less pleasant topics. She asked Mr. Romano if he beat his son. He answered, "Not much." From the mother as well as from Mike, Miss Earl knew this was an understatement; that the father never talked with Mike and continually whipped him. Later Mr. Romano admitted he had "done everything but murder" the boy, he was so bad. Miss Earl endeavored to show him the wrongness of his course, pointing out that he had never tried to find the good that was surely in the boy. She declared her conviction that Mike was very much what his father had been at his age. "Why don't you sit down and talk with him?—reason with him?" she asked.

Mr. Romano listened. That an outsider saw something to admire in his son, perceived signs of promise in him, doubtless revived the father's repressed pride and affection for the boy. The pointing out of a likeness between the two may have had a similar effect, or may have pierced to a deep vein of early submerged memories. At all events, Mr. Romano not only listened and reflected; he actually gave the visiting teacher's plan a trial. He began to get acquainted with his boy.

Some time before this interview with the father, Miss Earl had become convinced that Mike would do better in school if he had to work harder. She accordingly arranged for his transfer from the lower to the upper fourth grade. A first report of trouble from the new teacher proved to have nothing serious back of it and confirmed Miss Earl's impression that the teachers were influenced by his past record to expect the worst. Then, following his father's right-about-face in methods of handling the boy, and Mike's acquisition of new clothes, came a marked change for the better in his school attitude and a noteworthy increase of his interest in school work. The fact that his teacher acted upon

Miss Earl's suggestion in giving Mike school-room duties, such as distributing and collecting work materials, may have helped to this end by occupying odd moments and developing a sense of responsibility.

These changes marked the turn of the tide. To be sure, Mike's teacher reported trouble with him in November. She decided at this time, on the suggestion of the visiting teacher, to keep a little daily report of his conduct, Mike himself dictating what was to be written there. This report he brought every week to the visiting teacher, and the "excellents" upon it became numerous. However, old habits are not wholly uprooted in a few weeks, as was later to appear.

In December a new complication arose. Mrs. Romano reported to the visiting teacher, on one of the latter's weekly calls at the home, that Mike and two other boys had been guilty of most unseemly actions in the presence of Mike's sister Rosita. It also appeared that Mike continually used vile language.

Miss Earl acted at once. She had a private talk with each of the three boys at school, then got them together and proposed a plan. It was agreed that they should have the task of cleaning up the neighborhood which they had helped to make vile; that this was a task of citizenship; that they were responsible for seeing that no bad language was used there and no bad conduct indulged in; that they were to treat the younger children gently, remembering that they themselves had probably taught them all the badness they knew. This talk she followed up by calls at the homes of the other boys.

January brought mixed results. Early in the month Mike found himself in the principal's office again, sent by his teacher for deliberately throwing ink on another child's

paper. Though he denied his fault at first, and asserted that the ink-spilling had been accidental, he finally shamefacedly asked the visiting teacher "how a person apologizes." She asked him what he thought she would say if she had accidently spilled ink on his paper. Presently he went to his teacher and made amends.

Calling at the Romano home a little later, Miss Earl was impressed by Mike's better manner toward his mother, and encouraged to have Mrs. Romano report that his behavior had greatly improved. She had not heard any bad language from him in some time. This proved that there was something in his repeated assurances to the visiting teacher that he was trying to make the neighborhood better.

Then came the news that Mike had been promoted to the lower fifth grade, thus making an extra half year. The principal declared that this was the first legitimate promotion the boy had ever had.

The month of January was not to close, however, without another discreditable episode. One day Mike misbehaved seriously in the toilet. He was sent to the office. Next day he stayed away from school, and was still absent the following morning.

Once more the visiting teacher came to the rescue. At the home she learned that Mrs. Romano did not know the boy had been out of school. Returning at noon she found both Mike and his little brother Tony, who had stayed away from school also and spent the morning with him. Mike began to cry at sight of her, saying he did not want to go to jail. She asked him why he thought of such a thing. He answered that he knew he had been very bad, that he had stayed away from school because he was afraid to go back. The visiting teacher agreed to accompany him to the building to see if the principal would admit him.

On the way Miss Earl observed that Mike was looking exceedingly sulky, as was his habit when worried or cross. She told him that she refused to accompany him if he was going to wear such an expression in the principal's presence. He walked into the office looking like a young seraph, and of his own accord said, "I am very sorry."

The principal met the boy half way. She would let him come back to school if he could find some way of making up the time he had lost and also some way of assuring her that his little brother would not again play hookey. The visiting teacher remarked at this point that she was leaving the building but would call up at two o'clock to learn whether Mike had reached a decision. Hastily Mike asked, "What time is it now?" When Miss Earl telephoned, the principal reported that Mike had said he would personally see that Tony came to school every day, and that he thought he could make up the lost time by staying in at recesses and after school.

After this episode there was no more trouble with Mike. In March a substitute teacher held sway in his room for a time. The principal reported that she didn't know whether the skies were going to fall, but Mike had been "angelic" all through this experience. He was becoming very helpful about the building. He had a way of writing little notes to the visiting teacher from time to time telling her of his progress. His work was good, and his promotion was assured.

Shortly before the close of the school year Miss Earl saw Mr. Romano again. Her object was to persuade him to allow her to find a place for Mike on a farm for the summer. But Mr. Romano had other plans for his son. Mike had been proving very helpful about the store lately, and besides his father wanted to keep an eye on him. He was anxious to impress the visiting teacher with the fact that he had

stopped beating the boy and had hopes that he would some day be proud of him. Mike had a lot more sense than his father had supposed; "he is getting more sense all the time."

It would be a bit hard on a newly reformed youngster if awakened appreciation of his virtues on his father's part were to mean a summer of toil unrelieved by any country outing. Doubtless this reflection influenced Miss Earl to renew her attack, a little later, on the parental stronghold. This time it was the Y. M. C. A. camp whose attractions she presented. After the life of the camp had been explained to Mr. Romano, he consented to Mike's spending a fortnight there. It is a safe guess that Mike's faithful friend got as much satisfaction out of her success in arranging this good time for him as out of any of her efforts at remolding him or his elders.

After the apparent success achieved by the visiting teacher, it may be imagined with what feelings she learned, the following fall, that Mr. Romano had broken his word regarding camp and had kept Mike hard at work in his store all summer. Worse still, early in September the father had dragged his son to court for putting sticks in automobile wheels and other like deviltry. This action, the man later explained, had been taken in the hope that the judge would scare the boy into obedience, and when instead Mike was put on probation and required to report every week at court his father was much annoyed; the further requirement that he himself send a weekly report on the boy's behavior he completely disregarded.

From Mike's teacher, too, came reports as unfavorable as those of a year before. Apparently all the ground gained had been lost. The teacher felt that Mike should be sent at once to the state reform school.

The visiting teacher made a point of being in court when

next Mike was due to appear. The boy brought a poor report from his teacher and none from home. The judge informed him that unless he could bring evidence of improvement he would have to go to the reform school; then, seeing the visiting teacher, he told Mike to report to her, and asked that she consult the father and find out how the boy was doing at home.

Under the visiting teacher's close, sympathetic supervision an improvement soon began to appear, and before the school year was half over Mike was discharged by the court. His school work continued to improve and he made his regular promotions without difficulty, attaining the sixth grade in June. While a number of minor crises had to be met during the year, one line of effort alone seems to call for special mention.

In her early interviews with the boy the visiting teacher found that he was desperately afraid of being sent to the reform school; his father had told him terrible tales about what happened to boys there. Indeed his mind was full of fears and superstitions, largely implanted by his parents who for years had been trying to control him by threats of all kinds. His fear of death, in particular, was excessive; he had a special dread of an undertaker's establishment, and declared that he was constantly haunted in his dreams by dead people who came and whispered to him.

This situation the visiting teacher felt was serious enough to demand special attention. She succeeded in enlisting the interest of a psychologist who not only gave the usual intelligence tests but held several interviews with the boy, going carefully into the details of his various fears and their origin and endeavoring to suggest more wholesome and rational views. Miss Earl worked toward the same end, and felt that a measure of success was achieved. When in the spring

Mike volunteered to act as pall-bearer for a comrade who had died, she felt that he had certainly made progress since the days when he had been afraid to be near an undertaker's shop.

It may be noted that the psychologist who examined Mike found him to have a rating, by intelligence tests, which placed him in the dull-normal group. The interpretation of such a record is at best a delicate and difficult task; while in a child coming from a foreign home with its inevitable vocabulary handicap, this rating is to be accepted with many allowances. In any case, the visiting teacher's conviction that Mike is valuable human material was unchanged by the findings. The danger that his parents' mismanagement of him might land him in serious trouble continued, however, to be a real and pressing one.

The third year of work with Mike opened hardly more propitiously than the other two. Mr. Romano had again broken a promise to let him go to camp and had kept him at work all summer. The boy was full of resentment against his father; the school people soon became so irritated by various acts of apparent impudence and insubordination that they were ready to refer him to the court; the father also threatened resort to the court. Thus the visiting teacher was obliged to deal with three distinct situations.

With the boy she labored to bring about some appreciation of his father's good points and the difficulties he had surmounted in coming to America and establishing himself here; she tried to rouse some pride in his parent, some spirit of helpfulness. It was uphill work, for nothing was clearer than that Mr. Romano favored all his other children in preference to Mike, to whom his injustice was manifest. She was more successful in making the boy see the folly of open rebellion against authority, and as in the two earlier years, there has been gradual improvement.

With principal and teachers it was necessary to point out both the injustice which would be done this particular child by referring him to the court, and the mistaken policy, in general, of resorting to court action in what were clearly mere school disciplinary cases. By taking up carefully one individual instance of alleged impudence Miss Earl was able to prove that no evil intent had existed, that mere awkwardness and confusion in the use of language explained the incident.

The details of this episode are worth recounting as an example of the ease with which misunderstandings arise when one is dealing with a child who suffers from a language disability. The principal had told Mike to go back and ask his room teacher's pardon for some misdemeanor. He entered the room, saying: "Miss Gould, Miss Morris told you to ask my pardon." As Mike related this incident to the visiting teacher, he said, "Miss Morris told me to go back and ask her to ask my pardon, and she just fired me back as quick as she could. What did she mean when she asked her to ask my pardon?" He was sure that he had repeated the message as it was given him. Miss Earl attempted to coach him in the use of his pronouns, but he continued to twist them four times out of five. However, he did finally get out a satisfactory apology, and peace was restored.

It was with the boy's father that Miss Earl had her greatest difficulties—and with him that, after many failures, she at last won a single brilliant success.

Mike, in one of her talks with him this fall, had repeatedly expressed a great longing to be allowed to study the violin. The family already possessed an instrument, and his sister was taking piano lessons. Miss Earl talked first with Mrs. Romano, and succeeded in winning her over from decided

opposition to cordial agreement. Then, at the mother's request, she tackled Mr. Romano.

The man was at first very angry at the suggestion. Mike would never practise, he couldn't play at all, he was no good anyway; he always ran away—there had been a recent desertion of store duties for a ball game; his father felt that the only thing he could do was to take the boy to court and have him sent away. Miss Earl explained again, as she had the year before, that by so doing he would give up control of his son to the state until he should be twenty-one; that Mike had done nothing that warranted any such action. If his father would only grant him reasonable opportunities for recreation he would not run away, she pointed out; it was unreasonable to expect him to work in the store every minute he was not in school. She tried to induce Mr. Romano to agree to some program that included a little playtime for Mike, but utterly failed; all the man would do was to reiterate that he had always worked for his father, and Mike should do the same.

Mr. Romano spoke of his fury at the boy when he misbehaved, how he felt like "chopping his head off and feeding it to the dogs." In the next breath he enlarged on Mike's bad temper, how he frightened his mother and how hard he was to live with. When the visiting teacher suggested that the boy had perhaps inherited his temper from his father, or, having seen him angry many times, had come to believe that it was quite the natural thing to lose one's temper, Mr. Romano was amazed at the suggestion. Yet Miss Earl saw that he did turn the matter over in his mind. Presently she returned to the subject of the violin lessons. Finally, after much discourse upon the superiority of the other children, especially the favorite daughter, and the uselessness of wasting money on Mike, the man did give in; he authorized

the visiting teacher to call at the home for the violin and to arrange for a first lesson that very day.

Mike's surprise and joy when he was informed that this promise had been won was a delight to see. He could hardly believe in the great good fortune that had befallen him. His violin teacher after the first lesson expressed her opinion that the boy was a "real genius." He was practising hard, he told the visiting teacher the following week. He even went to the principal's office, beaming with joy, to announce that he was taking violin lessons.

* * *

That the successive years of work with Mike Romano have brought out new needs and have emphasized the importance of different approaches to his problem is evident.

Thus a commentator on the first year's record might well have drawn the conclusion that the improvement in the father's handling of his boy had been the most important element in counteracting the youngster's behavior trends. Yet the second year, after it had become only too evident that the apparent improvement in handling had been only temporary and that the man was mismanaging things as badly as ever, Mike made a no less striking gain. The conclusion seems inescapable that the visiting teacher's direct work with the boy has contributed most to his better adjustment. This conclusion is further confirmed by the slipping backward which has taken place during each summer vacation. Analysis of the visiting teacher's work with the boy is more difficult. The fact that she was a lover of children, with long experience in the handling of boys, of course made itself felt through each specific act. Her sympathy, at the outset, with Mike's desire to learn to swim, and her efforts to arrange a recreational program which

would give him an opportunity to acquire this art, probably counted for more than would appear from the youngster's cavalier manner of going off to the movies on the evenings when she was expected. Her avoidance of anything savoring of reproach or compulsion left him free to arrive by natural steps at the realization that he had thrown away a real opportunity.

Again, the plan of a daily report on conduct, either written or dictated by the child, is one that appears to be effective with many difficult youngsters. Sometimes the report is carried home weekly or daily to parents, sometimes, as in this instance, it is brought to the visiting teacher. Obviously the plan can be effective only when the receiver of the report is in full sympathy with the child and is one whom the child ardently wishes to please. The habit of remembering good resolutions, of inhibiting wayward tendencies, can be much strengthened by concentrating attention on hour-to-hour behavior. The capacity for objective judgment of personal acts—the ability to see himself as others see him—may be developed in discussion of the day's happenings preliminary to deciding what is to be dictated.

It need hardly be pointed out that the visiting teacher was acting on a sound psychological principle when, that first spring, she suggested a counter activity of a useful sort rather than mere abstention from evil. How far this particular boy or group of boys could go in "cleaning up the neighborhood" may be open to question. What seems clear is that they would be more likely to correct their own bad habits if they could be led to regard themselves as examples, as leaders in a battle for good citizenship, rather than as mere sinners striving to reform. The ego instinct in every child makes him desire to play a leading part, and the super-

abundant energies of a healthy small boy are difficult to direct into the passive role of resisting temptation.

The emergence, the second year, of a hitherto unsuspected set of factors in the mental life of the boy is a phenomenon full of instruction for any worker who is given to fancying that he has got to the bottom of a human problem. No less so is the discovery, the third year, of an apparently genuine and deep-seated ambition, and the use of this ambition as a lever in a new effort at adjustment. The importance of keeping an open mind, of being ever on the alert for new evidence and new avenues to influence, could hardly be better illustrated.

Many times during the past two years the prospect before this boy has been dark and threatening enough. With the continuing home difficulty other equally serious crises during the years to come are to be anticipated. Yet at the moment our latest advices from the scene of combat hold out a new hope: Mike's happiness in his music, his appreciation of at last being permitted to realize one great desire, may modify his behavior at home; his father's pride in the boy's success—if success comes—may lead to the granting of other privileges and to a more normal attitude generally. The hope is perhaps slender; the road that lies ahead is full of pitfalls; but no more constructive form of service exists than that which provides, as here, new resources of enjoyment and new opportunities for achievement in one.

A Girl and Her Mother

WE all talk a great deal, now-a-days, about prevention. We are weary of dealing with end-results, of trying to change long-established habits and patch up

situations that ought never to have been permitted to arise. But there are so many of these end-situations to be dealt with that most of us find it hard to disentangle ourselves from them.

It is because of her rare opportunities to do preventive work with children who are showing the first signs of a drift toward wrong-doing that the visiting teacher's position in social work is such a strategic one. Who but a visiting teacher, for example, would have been in a position to notice, last fall, that Sarah Hart and Clara Myers were becoming inseparable, and that their way of whispering around the corners, during recess and after school, was rather unwholesome. Or what other worker, if she had noticed these points, could have found time to take action regarding them?

Miss Heath's action was not precipitate. She stopped for a few friendly words with the girls from time to time, but was careful not to single either out for special attention.

Both girls were over age for their grade, the sixth. Clara, the older and larger, was recently from the country; she had a rather bold and forward manner that rendered her a bit conspicuous on city streets. Miss Heath had already influenced her to join the Girl Scouts, and had been watching her for several weeks with some anxiety. Sarah, not quite fourteen-and-a-half, was very mature-looking physically. She was attractive, despite neglected hair and clothes, with a sweet, child-like smile and nice eyes.

Miss King, the girls' teacher, reported that Sarah was continually tardy, and when urged to be on time complained that she had so much to do at home that she just couldn't manage it. Her school work was also poor, owing largely to her listlessness and lack of interest. She was not regarded by the school as a conduct problem. The visiting teacher's own observations in the classroom confirmed this report.

During the geography lesson both girls sat quiet, dreamily looking on while the younger children enthusiastically discussed certain special topics assigned the day before. When Sarah was called upon, she appeared absent-minded and embarrassed, and did not answer.

Visits to the homes of the two girls seemed the desirable next step. Mrs. Myers thought Sarah a nice child; she did not know her mother, though the two families lived only a few blocks apart. The girls had gone for evening walks several times lately, and last night Clara's younger brother had reported having seen them with two strange young men. After some discussion of the situation Mrs. Myers agreed that it might be well to invite the girls to receive their company in Clara's home. Then, if the boys seemed a decent sort, the young folks might all be taken to a movie together, or for a ride in the family car. Mrs. Myers would visit Sarah's mother on her first free afternoon.

Sarah's home was a less prosperous one than Clara's. Her father was dead, her mother had married again, a man who hardly supported the family. Mrs. Hart, a small, weary, dragged-out looking woman, was apparently well-meaning, but the struggle to make ends meet left her little energy for coping with the needs of an adolescent daughter.

Sarah, she said, had some time before missed the better part of a year from school owing to an attack of diphtheria which had left her in very frail health. She was strong now, but had never been able to catch up with her former class, and had consequently lost all interest in her studies. She was supposed to dress herself and her baby brother mornings, and to help with the breakfast, but it was almost impossible to get her up in time. The girl was not on good terms with her step-father; indeed, her antagonism against him had developed to such a point that the mother feared one or the

other would leave home. Sarah complained bitterly because she had to work so hard and could never have new clothes. During the last fortnight, since she had begun chumming with Clara, she had begged to be allowed to go walking in the evening, and to the movies. Her mother had refused, and twice the girl had slipped away and had not come in until late. Since then Mrs. Hart had succeeded in keeping her at home, maintaining a close watch, but Sarah had been cross and resentful.

Workers with girls will recognize in this home situation a familiar type. It is from such backgrounds that many of our runaway girls, our juvenile delinquents, come each year; how many girls, submitting to similar conditions, grow up without the normal joys of youth, is also a question worth considering.

The visiting teacher listened sympathetically to the mother's account of her difficulties. Then she offered a few suggestions. It was natural, she pointed out, that Sarah should want to be like other girls, to have the things they had. How would it be if some clothing that might be made over for the girl could be obtained; would Sarah be interested to undertake the sewing involved?

Mrs. Hart was sure she would. Then, might not membership in the Scouts help to create wholesome interests? What about some Saturday work, which would enable Sarah to earn money for scout dues and for such items as shoes? Or how would her mother feel about the girl's going into some nice family, attending school, and receiving a small wage?

Mrs. Hart was delighted with these plans. She would gladly do without Sarah's help; as things were the girl was only a worry to her. She also received in good part the suggestion that she call on Mrs. Myers and take Sarah up to the Myers' home once in a while in the evening.

The following afternoon Clara and Sarah came to the visiting teacher's office of their own accord. Clara wanted to say that she thought she would drop out of the Scouts. The moment was critical, but the visiting teacher knew better than to show the anxiety she felt. She did not take up the issue; instead, she asked about school, then led the girls on to talk about books they had read or would like to read, and finally brought them to the topic of recreation. They talked on for over an hour, and before they left Clara had decided to continue her scout work, and Sarah, to consult her mother about joining.

Next day Sarah slipped into Miss Heath's room alone. She did want to join the Scouts, but she hadn't had the courage to ask her mother for the dues. The informal visit of the night before had evidently left her with the feeling that she could talk freely to the visiting teacher, and they went over her whole situation carefully. She admitted that she needed underwear and a dress very much, and seemed pathetically happy at the prospect of making them herself.

Within a day or two arrangements were made with the Scout leader to refrain from asking for Sarah's entrance fee for a few weeks, and Sarah was introduced to her and very warmly received. Also, Mrs. Hart was given some thin white goods and she and Sarah set to work making underwear. At the end of a week the mother reported that the girl was seeming happier lately than she had been for a long time.

Soon after this, the principal dropped in on Miss Heath to ask if it would not be a good scheme for the parent-teachers' association to buy clothing for Sarah. The visiting teacher suggested that the girl needed the interest of sewing as much as she did the clothing, and needed also the self-respect and feeling of independence that she would gain from doing the work for herself. The principal appreciated

this point of view, and presently brought in a good cloth dress of her own, which proved to be just the thing for Sarah. Mrs. Hart found a bright scarf that could be used for trimming, Miss Heath arranged with the teacher of dress-making to give needed help and advice in the remodeling process, and soon the work was going happily forward. It was interesting to see how the mother's attitude changed as she and her daughter worked side by side; she was even heard to drop a few words of praise for the girl's handling of her job. As for Sarah, no further suggestions of a desire to go out in the evening had come from her in some time; dress-making was proving a most absorbing occupation.

Another source of interest, as Christmas drew near, was work with the girl Scouts in preparing for a bazaar. Life seemed quite a bit more "full of a number of things" to Sarah, these days. Perhaps that was the reason why her teacher was able to report, in the middle of December, that the child had not been tardy for some time.

Just before vacation began word came, from the juvenile employment bureau where Miss Heath had registered Sarah, of a promising place as household assistant for the holiday season. Sarah showed eagerness to accept the opportunity, but hesitated to leave home just before Christmas; her mother would need her, she feared. Would Miss Heath talk with her mother, and obtain the final decision from her?

Mrs. Hart was tearfully happy that Sarah had been so considerate of her, but did not want to spoil the child's chance of obtaining a good home. So the decision came back to Sarah. After some hesitation the girl asked whether Miss Heath thought she could help her to find another place later? In that case she would not take the present one, for she felt that her mother really needed her just at this time.

Early in January another good home was offered—that of a young couple with one small baby. Miss Heath took the girl to call, and found Mrs. Anderson a highly sensible young woman, who was apparently ready to take a genuine helpful interest in Sarah and her affairs. She explained in detail what she would expect in the way of services and agreed to pay $3 a week to begin with. Miss Heath also took Sarah to the school she was to attend, and made her acquainted with her future teachers.

After a trial week-end in the new home, Sarah came to school for her transfer; the Andersons lived in an outlying suburb. She was "never so happy in her life." Mrs. Anderson, reached by telephone, said she was delighted with Sarah's appearance and personality, and with the way she took hold of the work. She and her husband had talked things over and had decided that if the girl stayed with them they would help her with her clothes, take her with them on trips, and treat her like a little sister. The visiting teacher suggested that the acquaintance of Sarah's mother be made at the first opportunity.

Thus far, the happy auguries of this promising start have been fulfilled. Sarah has done well enough in the new school to be promoted, though on condition. She likes her new teacher, and is happy in her home. Every Sunday, after the morning's work is completed, she goes to her own people for the rest of the day. She appreciates her family, and they her, as never before. Mrs. Hart is making aprons for her, bought with her own earnings, and the girl seems glad to have her mother help plan how these earnings shall be used. Mrs. Hart says Sarah is learning many nice ways of housekeeping. Evidently the girl is a success as a worker, for from the new neighborhood three requests have come to the visiting teacher for "girls like Mrs. Anderson's Sarah."

A few fragments of comment reported by the visiting teacher from Mrs. Anderson, from Sarah's new teacher, and from the girl herself will convey more of the real situation that exists in the new home than could pages of description.

Mrs. Anderson: "Sarah seems like my little sister. I can see myself in her so often. She has the same interests and longings and has missed the same things in her girlhood that I did."

Sarah's new teacher: "I like to look at her—she is beautiful. It shows what the right food and home environment can do for a girl. Her expression is so different. I never saw a more discontented and unhappy looking girl in my life than Sarah when you brought her in. Now she is active, alert, and always smiling."

Sarah herself: "Miss Heath, I just love that baby—he is the sweetest thing."

Miss Heath: "Don't you find it hard to stay with him evenings instead of going out as you used to?"

Sarah: "Oh, no, I never think of going out evenings any more. Mrs. Anderson lets me go with some of the girls afternoons when there is something interesting going on. At first the girls did not take me in because I was working for Mrs. Anderson but they do now for Mrs. Anderson makes them see I am one of the family."

II

FEELINGS OF INFERIORITY

"The child cannot be taught self-realization: he can only reach that goal through achievement. All teaching has only a negative value compared with the positive value of the experience of achievement. The urge to achievement is the progressive side of the striving after power. The regressive side of it is the lure of attracting attention and creating an effect upon people. The child is a born sensation-monger. . . . Recent educational experiments have proved to how great an extent the system of enforced attention creates its own problem, and how the force of spontaneous interest, set free to work on suitable material, encounters its own experience of discipline as it makes its way along the road to achievement."

H. Crichton Miller, M.D., in
The New Psychology and the Teacher

"From continued success through many years an attitude of confidence is developed. On this largely morale depends, and in many cases a single marked success goes far to produce it. This stimulus of success is an essential condition of normal development and mental health. Continued failure, on the other hand, is liable to develop an unsocial attitude, the shut-in personality, and to plant the seeds, perhaps, of mental disorder. . . . The teacher's business is to see to it that every child at some time, in some way, in some subject, achieves a marked success, and that sometimes they get an honest gauge of themselves by failure. . . . The business of the social worker also in large part is to give concrete tasks to those who are chronic failures, to give the opportunity for success so that the stimulus of success may be a help to further activities."

William Burnham, Ph.D., in *The Normal Mind*

II

FEELINGS OF INFERIORITY

THE role which success, when it carries with it a sense of achievement, plays in the development of the child's personality is generally recognized now-a-days by students of child life. On the other hand, the part played by persistent failure, with a resultant feeling of inferiority to one's fellows, in producing personality difficulties is being emphasized by those who have devoted themselves to the study of delinquent and maladjusted children.

The stories grouped under this heading are not the only ones in the present collection which illustrate the point at issue. Among the later narratives, "Promoted to Special" perhaps shows as clearly as do any here the injurious results of habitual failure and the curative effects of an experience of success. It is excluded from the present group because definite feeble-mindedness places its problem in a somewhat different category.

Dr. Marion E. Kenworthy, writing[1] on the subject of inferiority feelings and the disordered behavior to which they lead, mentions four main causes of such feelings: first, inability on the part of the child to rise to the level of his family's aspirations for him; second, too easy success at an early age, resulting in a false sense of security which is rudely shattered by later experiences of failure; third, an unduly intense drive toward a standard of achievement unattainable by legitimate means; fourth, unfavorable com-

[1] "The Logic of Delinquency," by Marion E. Kenworthy, M.D. Papers and Proceedings of the American Sociological Society, Vol. XVI.

parison with others in the family circle, especially with brothers or sisters.

It would appear that in three of our stories the first of these causes—a discrepancy between family aspirations and a child's abilities—was more or less operative, and that in two of them the fourth—unfavorable comparisons with relatives—was an important factor. Probably there is a trace of the second in "The Show-Off"; the youngster's early success as a musician and the pride in it fostered by his parents may well have made his failure in the art of reading, so readily acquired by his less gifted classmates, particularly galling. "A Struggle Against Odds" illustrates the unduly intense striving named as the third cause. Other contributing factors are touched upon in the narratives. All of them may be grouped under those two related instinctive drives, active in all of us—the drive to self-maintenance and the drive to self-advancement; "ego cravings," as Dr. Kenworthy points out, which are "essential to the economy of the personality of everyone," and the blocking or thwarting of which, therefore, may lead to serious results. That the results produced, in most of the children here studied, were no more serious is of course due to the fact that the blocking and thwarting process had continued no longer—that the children were taken in hand at an age when preventive work was still possible.

Even in the absence of these four special causes, the conspicuously dull boy and girl are, by the very nature of their handicap, compelled to feel themselves inferior to a majority of their classmates. Steven and Alice, Jim and Herbert, each with his or her special degree and variety of dullness, stand for thousands of children who every year suffer, and are thwarted and warped, in a rigid school system constructed to fit the average child.

On this theme of the dull child in the school Dr. Jessie Taft[1] has written a passage which sets the problem in such a clear light that we quote it in its entirety:

"With the distinctly inferior child, no amount of home treatment can undo the effect of his inevitable and constant failure to come up to public-school standards. It is here that we get our most serious problems of delinquency, beginning and confirmed. If the case problems presented to me by child-caring agencies in Philadelphia during the past year and a half are any criterion, the crucial situation in all children's work is lack of suitable school opportunities for the dull-normal child. In Philadelphia, at least, and I am sure in the vast majority of city public schools still running along conventional academic lines, there is no possibility of obtaining for the dull-normal child, who has become a behavior problem because of his sense of inferiority and failure, the treatment that will touch his case—a school program suited to his abilities. He is not allowed by law to leave the public school when it gets beyond him, yet to face failure, ridicule, reprimands, day after day, is something that human nature cannot do without efforts to escape from so unbearable a situation. The child will either run away in body or in spirit. He is bound to gain a sense of importance somehow—if not by good conduct, by bad. He will take refuge in sullenness, indifference, or in more active, aggressive attempts to counteract the boredom and inferiority of his position. If he cannot shine in school, he can perhaps become the terror of the neighborhood. There is only one possible treatment for this type of child, and that is to offer him legitimate avenues of successful expression. If school or work offers him a chance to act successfully, he

[1] "Problems of Social Case Work with Children," by Jessie Taft, Ph.D. *Mental Hygiene*, July 1920, pp. 537–549.

will seek social approval, just as he apparently sought social disapproval before. All you need to do to prove this statement is to put such a child into a school that gives him work in which he can succeed. He becomes the simplest of case problems. His energy goes over into useful activity and drains off from the unsocial channels. Often he is a new child in so short a time that the change seems almost magical. Let the dull-normal child use his hands first and his intellect second, put him with his peers and not his superiors, and in the majority of cases he will cease to be a problem."

A Show-Off

AMONG the group of second graders going through a folk dance in the gymnasium one afternoon, a handsome youngster, somewhat larger and older than most of the others, caught Miss Lawrence's eye. He had a good head and carried himself well, so that she found herself following his movements with pleasure.

Presently she became aware that her interest was not unnoted. The boy had evidently been keenly conscious of her presence since she entered the gymnasium, and as he realized that she was watching him his brown eyes sparkled, his erectness became a strut, and all his bowings and bendings exaggerated themselves. Miss Lawrence watched a moment longer, then transferred her attention to another child, noting mentally as she did so, "Very self-conscious boy, inclined to show off. Why?"

Several weeks later Steven Todd was referred to her by the second-grade teacher and identified himself as the show-off of that afternoon. Soon she began to find the answer to her "why."

At nine, in the second grade, Steven could not read. In the classroom he refused to make himself one of the group. He was so anxious to see what everyone else was doing that he never got any directions for himself. He was critical of his classmates and dictatorial in his manner toward them, wanting to assume the management of every new enterprise undertaken. On the other hand, he had formed the habit of crying at the least little thing, and of avoiding as many difficulties as possible—for example, making an excuse to leave the room when his turn to read came. He was also beginning to display a bad temper. Altogether he was felt not only by his teacher but by the primary supervisor to present one of the most serious problems in the school.

There was one thing that Steve really did well; he played the fife. He showed great eagerness to play on every public occasion.

It was now late in December. For three months Miss Miller, Steve's classroom teacher, had been endeavoring to work out a solution to his problem. One of its phases she had succeeded in nearly eliminating. Early in October she had kept Steve after school one night for spelling. He had cried. She had merely remarked that as soon as he was through he might do his work. This policy of disregard had apparently been successful; she hadn't had much trouble with crying since. In other respects, however, she felt that she was making little headway.

The manner in which Miss Lawrence should make the acquaintance of her new charge was simply and naturally arranged so that he should feel the minimum of self-consciousness in being referred to a stranger: Miss Miller sent Steve to her with a book. Miss Lawrence talked with the boy for some time. She found him a very attractive, well-cared-for child; but he appeared nervous, self-conscious, and

disposed to play to the gallery. When the word "reading" was unintentionally used by the visiting teacher in talking about another matter he became especially self-conscious, drew in his lip and looked as though he were going to cry. More favorable signs, however, were not lacking; he was observant and displayed a good fund of general knowledge. He spoke of his own accord about his playing, and wanted Miss Lawrence to come to his house some day to hear him.

Observation of Steve in his gymnasium work showed him to be alert, with a good sense of rhythm. In certain directed in-door games, moreover, he displayed an acquaintance with out-of-door things equal to that of any of his class-mates, and a good ability to get on with other children, despite his tendency to play the boss.

The visiting teacher arranged with the school psychologist to give Steve an individual mental examination. As her experience had taught her that dull children are often exceedingly sensitive to being picked out for such testing, she suggested that care be taken to test several brighter children on the same day. The value of this precaution was evident: Steve had turned white with fear when summoned for the test, but grew calm when he heard the names of the other children to be examined, whose superior standing was known to him. He responded well, but made a rather poor showing nevertheless, ranking as a dull-normal child. Still, no explanation of his special reading disability appeared. The psychologist wondered if it were possible that the boy was deficient in visual imagery. Miss Lawrence told of the good imitations Steve had given in certain games, for example, one of a turkey strutting and one of his mother making a pie—in the latter even remembering to cut off the scraggly edges of the dough. This, the psychologist agreed, was good

evidence against there being any such lack in the boy's mental make-up.

A former teacher, seen at about this time, expressed the opinion that Steve was deficient in power of retention. She told of efforts to utilize his interest in music and mechanical matters in teaching him to read, and of the failure of these attempts. This same teacher knew something of the boy's family on his father's side. None of them had done well at books, but all, including his father, had made good citizens. Of the boy's mother she knew less; Mrs. Todd was something of a musician, it appeared, and occupied herself largely in giving piano lessons.

From the school nurse came the report that medical examination, the year before, had shown Steve to have defective vision. The Todd's family doctor, however, had disagreed, and as the boy's parents had unlimited faith in their medical adviser nothing had been done about remedying the condition. Since Miss Lawrence planned to visit in the home, the nurse was glad to have her assume responsibility for urging consultation with an oculist.

While she had been gathering in, from various sources, these side-lights on Steve's problem, Miss Lawrence had also been endeavoring to make connections with the person most closely concerned—the boy's mother. After several attempts, she was successful.

Mrs. Todd, found at home in a pleasant roomy house, was tall, slight, and fair, a pretty and attractive woman. She had a quick decided way of speaking and gave the impression of being somewhat nervous. She expressed pleasure in seeing the visiting teacher and was grateful for her interest in Steve. She showed anxiety over the boy's slow progress, and a willingness to follow suggestions.

Steve was the only child. The mother's account of his

babyhood indicated a normal start in life, but until within a year he had been troubled by enuresis, wetting his bed rather frequently in spite of all precautions. This babyish weakness seemed now to have cleared up. He slept alone, with window raised, and displayed no nervousness at night, never waking with bad dreams.

Miss Lawrence took up with Mrs. Todd the question of defective eyesight as a possible element in the child's reading difficulty, telling of the various defects which hamper reading and making a special point of a squint she had observed. She told, rather casually, of a little nephew of her own, who had been exceedingly nervous, and of the marked improvement that had taken place in him since he began to wear glasses. Mrs. Todd was sure nothing of the sort could be responsible for her son's special difficulty, as he had no trouble at all in reading his music. She rather half-heartedly agreed, however, that it might be well to have an eye examination.

The talk was carefully steered by the visiting teacher to a discussion of the attitude most likely to prove helpful in solving the boy's reading problem. There had been, Mrs. Todd acknowledged, a good deal of scolding and nagging, in the effort to pull Steve up to the mark in this respect. Here was an important revelation. The mother appreciated the point made by the visiting teacher that it would be wise to cease for a time all mention of the child's disability, and to make a special point of praising him whenever he did read anything correctly. Miss Lawrence suggested that short, interesting children's stories might be placed on the living room table along with the other books and magazines, in the hope of tempting Steve to read, and that occasionally Mr. and Mrs. Todd might ask him to read for them some little thing that they knew he could do, emphasizing the point that he was reading as a favor to them, not to help

himself. There should be no forcing him to the task, but every encouragement when he volunteered or showed a willingness to accede to such a request.

At school, in similar fashion, the visiting teacher brought about the adoption of a new policy. Steve was to be encouraged in every possible way. In this connection Miss Miller frankly stated that ever since the child had been in her room she had been more or less annoyed with his attitude and his slowness. She thought she had carefully concealed this feeling, but had sometimes wondered if it had not been carried over to him nevertheless.

Mrs. Todd had told Miss Lawrence of Steve's enjoyment of the "funnies" in the Sunday paper, how he could hardly wait to get hold of them each week. In spite of his reading disability, he would somehow figure out the meaning of these. Following a line suggested by this taste for the comic, Miss Lawrence a few weeks later stopped at the boy's home and left with Mrs. Todd a copy of "Jimmy Crow's Garden." She suggested that since it was simple enough for Steve to read, no attempt be made to read it to him, although he might be helped with certain words.

It appeared at this time that Steve's parents had been refraining from saying anything about his reading, except to encourage him. The night before they had been quite electrified by the youngster's announcement that he thought he would go to summer school. When they asked why, he said that he wanted to learn to read better, adding that if he didn't pass he could make up his work in summer school, and if he did pass it wouldn't hurt him. Coming from a child who a month before had been ready to cry if reading was mentioned, this attitude was certainly encouraging. Miss Lawrence suggested that when the boy said, "If I pass," his parents assure him that he would pass, pointing

out that it was up to him, and try to put confidence in his own ability into him. In talking of summer school, present inability to read should not be dwelt upon, but better reading should be stressed as the goal.

The visiting teacher kept in touch, too, with Steve's teacher, and lost no opportunity to pass on to the boy the encouraging reports which began to come from her. Gradually he lost the scared look that had been noticeable in her earlier talks with him. He told her he was reading "Jimmy Crow's Garden" and wanted to finish it. He made to her the same statement about summer school that he had made to his parents. He seemed really to have a desire to read. His manner, when he brought a school exercise to show her, was much less self-conscious than formerly. When she pointed out mistakes in his work he tried to think out what was wrong, and was not embarrassed over the matter.

All through the spring Steve's gain appeared to be steady. His work in school improved, and at home he showed less nervousness and began to assume more responsibility. His mother reported that now when she sent him to the store he counted his money before he went, figured out exactly how much change he should have left, and always brought back the right amount. It was noted that when he was asked if he was going to be promoted he no longer answered, "I don't know," but responded either that he hoped he was going to be, or was sure he would be.

The event proved this new confidence to be justified: June brought the cheering news that the boy was to be promoted to the third grade. Miss Lawrence took pleasure in conveying this report to Mrs. Todd. The mother was full of gratitude for the help given her son, whose improvement she keenly appreciated. It was a propitious moment in which to urge once more that attention be given to Steve's eyes, and Mrs.

Todd promised to have an examination made during the summer vacation.

* * *

It had of course been a disappointment to the visiting teacher to have so many months elapse without being able to bring about this needed eye-examination; disappointments due to conflicting counsel from medical advisers are common experiences among social workers. The delay in this instance served however to set in clear relief the true origin of Steve's reading disability. For this disability, now conquered, evidently could not have been due to a physical defect which still existed. The cause seemed rather to lie in a chronic state of fear which had developed as a result of having an original slight backwardness taken over-seriously by parents and teachers. Once the pressure resulting from this attitude on the part of his elders was removed, and encouragement substituted for displays of anxiety, the boy's tension relaxed and he was able to achieve normal progress.

To make a child acutely conscious of the fact that he presents a problem is not usually the best way of helping him to solve it. Frequently, as in Steve's case, such exaggerated self-consciousness and timidity not only hamper his development along the line where he is weakest, but drive him to a display of compensatory over-confidence along other lines and to the development of irritating traits of character which make all his life-adjustments more difficult. Thus one child may become a show-off because of his acute sense of inferiority on certain points, just as another for a similar reason becomes shut-in and unsocial.

A year has passed since Steve's promotion to the third grade. He has made the regular two promotions for this period, and while he has not distinguished himself in any

way, has held his own. He has become definitely less self-conscious and inclined to make a display. He is still a good deal of a dictator, but since his leadership is amiably accepted by his classmates there seems no occasion to worry about this characteristic. The boss appears to have his place in the scheme of things among children as well as among adults.

"Not Bright"

WINTHROP DANE'S teacher in the fourth grade pointed him out to the visiting teacher in class the day she asked her to take him in hand. His scholarship was poor, in fact he was failing, and Miss Cummings doubted his ability to comprehend the work. He was inclined to be pouty and impudent. Miss Hazen observed that he was a large boy for his nine years. He was slouchy and had a petulant expression.

In the visiting teacher's office, later on the same day, Winthrop at first appeared sullen and seemed to be in fear of a scolding. This feeling gradually subsided in Miss Hazen's friendly presence, and the boy began to reveal something of his true self. He showed much sensitiveness, especially when speaking of his home troubles. He had two big brothers who were forever teasing him, he said; the older, Tom, also tried to discipline him, and it was evident that the boy harbored a bitter resentment toward him on this account. Winthrop realized that he was failing, was discouraged, had apparently given up trying. He began to cry, and the interview had to be brought to a close.

The school records showed that the boy had never before failed of promotion. His work in the lower grades had always been fair or fair plus; his conduct and attendance

had been good. A significant point not before brought out was that Winthrop had been absent on account of diphtheria for seven weeks during the preceding fall. His teacher felt it impossible to promote him and advised that he repeat the present grade.

No intelligence tests had ever been given to Winthrop, and as there was no psychologist available it was impossible now to have such a study made. In many instances Miss Hazen had felt her work hampered by this lack of expert service, but Winthrop's earlier school record gave good reason to believe that he was possessed of average intelligence, and his recent illness seemed largely to account for his poor work this year.

Winthrop's mother was a large, placid woman; the home was of ample size, clean and comfortable, with such luxuries as a piano and a victrola. Despite her placidity Mrs. Dane showed a good deal of anxiety about Winthrop and was quite ready to talk over his situation with the visiting teacher. The two big brothers, now working successfully in downtown offices, had never experienced any trouble in school. Tom in particular was making a striking business success and was clearly his mother's pride and joy. There was also a girl in high school who was an excellent student and a good deal of a pet both with her teachers and at home.

In contrast with these achievements of the older children, Winthrop's poor record stood out painfully. His brothers were accustomed, the mother said, to twit him unmercifully on his monthly reports, and she herself had begun to suspect that he was "not bright." Tom, as Winthrop had stated, often took it upon himself to administer punishment to the youngster when the mother had difficulty in managing him.

Inquiry regarding the boy's developmental record revealed no abnormality or marked retardation. In this con-

nection the mother was inclined to dwell on the fact that her husband had formerly been a heavy drinker. The months before Winthrop's birth stood out especially in her memory because of incessant quarrelling with her husband due to this cause. In recent years, though he still drank occasionally his habits had improved so that an orderly home life was possible. The visiting teacher received the impression that the mother and older children really dominated the situation.

Mrs. Dane's account of present home conditions, together with the facts previously gathered at the school, led Miss Hazen to certain definite conclusions, and she endeavored to put over a new interpretation of Winthrop's difficulties. The mother was led to see how holding up to the boy the successes of the other children, and constant disparagement of him by them, had operated to develop in him feelings of inferiority which had finally led to his losing interest in trying. She was warned especially not to let herself harbor the thought that he was lacking in intelligence, but to encourage him in every possible way and to keep the others from discouraging him. He was slow, it was admitted, but not stupid; his hand work was good, and if his attitude could be changed he should be able, next term, to make his grade. Owing to his long absence when ill he could not be promoted at mid-year's.

Mrs. Dane showed an intelligent appreciation of the points made and promised to do as was advised.

At school, Miss Hazen went over Winthrop's home situation with Miss Cummings, dwelling upon his difficulties and upon the more hopeful outlook now that the mother could be counted on for help in overcoming his habit of failure. Since the boy would be one of the older pupils in the new class, and was familiar with the teacher's methods,

it was suggested that he be given a rear seat and made monitor. The point was emphasized that if he could be made to feel that he was a success in something both his conduct and his scholarship would improve. Miss Cummings agreed to try the plan proposed.

Winthrop's response to the changed methods was immediate. In a fortnight's time he had come to seem quite happy. He was working hard and his grades were improving. His attitude toward the visiting teacher came out rather touchingly when on Valentine's day he brought her the large red heart he had made in school, with ten perfect spelling papers inside it. He said he was getting on much better at home.

Before spring Winthrop's teacher reported that he had become one of her best pupils. There was no question but that he would be promoted with his class. One of the big factors in helping her to get hold of the boy, Miss Cummings said, had been the better understanding of him and his home background which the visiting teacher had given her. About this time he took a leading part in a class play. He had no more complaints of treatment at home.

* * *

Winthrop's story furnishes an especially clear illustration of the influence which feelings of inferiority may have upon a child's scholarship and behavior; especially clear, because in this case no complicating factors blur the picture. His teacher had the discernment to pick him out and seek treatment for him before he had developed any serious behavior difficulty. So far as known, he did not suffer from any special disability, as do certain other children whose stories are here told. Apparently he was simply a rather slow-minded youngster who had to endure comparison

with brighter brothers and sisters; comparison intensified when illness led to his losing school work. The speed with which an intelligent family and a sympathetic teacher can modify their attitude in the light of such information as the visiting teacher furnished is shown, as is the immediate lightening of the child's burden which followed.

A Struggle Against Odds

BOYS had been coming to the visiting teacher's office daily—she had interviewed more than a hundred there during the past six months; yet Harold Ogden was the first to show marked fear at the encounter. As he entered she noticed his staring eyes, pale face, and tense, frightened manner; his thin, undernourished little body was trembling from head to foot.

Miss Hamilton opened the interview by asking Harold about his work—the phase of his problem which it seemed easiest for a stranger to approach. She had seen his grades, and as she was always interested in boys whose work had slumped, was anxious to find out how to help him.

Harold answered in a peculiar indistinct mumbling voice that trailed off at the end of the sentence. He said he did not like school, then added, as if he were giving expression to a well-known truth, that no one liked school. Pressing a bit further the visiting teacher found that the boy definitely felt that no real fellow liked to go to school, that the real fellows were the ones who hated school, did failing work, enjoyed bothering the teacher and disturbing the classroom. He rambled off into an indistinct murmur to the effect that he did not know this school, did not know the rooms, had never been in this room before. Asked again about his

studies, he thought he was having most trouble with history; but he showed no interest in the visiting teacher's suggestion that he bring his history book in sometime and let her try to help him. Miss Hamilton shortened the interview because of Harold's evident anxiety and alarm. So peculiar had been his whole attitude and manner that she determined to call at his home that very afternoon. His mother, she hoped, might be able to help in relieving the strain which he was evidently suffering under.

On her way she reviewed once more what she had learned of him from the teacher who had referred him and from the school records:

"The boy is so excessively nervous that he is unable to do any work. He can't keep still, seems to have a nervous twitching of his body. Is subjected to teasing by the other boys. I feel the condition is growing worse and wonder whether the mother realizes it."

Thus wrote the teacher of the upper sixth grade. School records showed normal progress through the grades by this eleven-year-old boy, with good marks, mostly A's and B's, prevailing up to the last year. He had been for over two years in his present school, to which he had been transferred from another public school. For some time past he had been doing very poor work and had been troublesome in class, talking, misbehaving, laughing, and trying to attract the attention of the other boys who were beginning to regard him as "rather crazy."

Mrs. Ogden was at home in a very comfortable house in a good neighborhood. She was a pleasant-looking, quiet-mannered woman. Mr. Ogden, it appeared, was in the insurance business. He was at home evenings and with Harold a great deal. The boy was their only child.

Harold, his mother said, had come home at noon much

perturbed because he had been called into the visiting teacher's office and didn't understand why; Mrs. Ogden was on the point of going over to the school to find out just what was the matter. She had recently received a note from the teacher which recounted in some detail the boy's misdeeds and stated that his behavior must improve if he was to do passing work. Naturally she had assumed that the visit to Miss Hamilton was due to some fresh misdemeanor on his part.

The visiting teacher explained the nature of her work in the school and how Harold had been brought to her attention because of his nervousness. She read the teacher's report to Mrs. Ogden and described the effect of the recent interview upon the boy, explaining that most boys seemed to regard being called to her office as not at all an unusual or alarming experience.

Mrs. Ogden in reply stated that she had been having difficulty with Harold for a long time. Indeed her anxieties about him began when he was a tiny baby, as he had not thriven when she nursed him. When he was small he had suffered from an attack of measles so severe that they had despaired of his life, and ever since then she had worried over him constantly. She had kept him with her and away from other children, dreading contagion for him, had gone with him to school and called for him there, fearing accidents. Recently an attack of diphtheria had redoubled her anxiety; she felt that he was in a very frail condition. She said in a distressed way that she guessed all her attention had done nothing but make a nervous wreck of the boy. When the school nurse had examined him a few months before he had been greatly upset, and he showed such extreme aversion to the idea of his mother's visiting the school that she took pains to conceal from him any visits that she did make.

The most striking feature of Harold's mental life, as it emerged from the mother's account, was his consuming fear of being called a sissy, and his equally consuming desire to excel in athletics and be accepted as a regular fellow by the other boys. He had got into a desperate frame of mind because of his poor physique and nervous mannerisms, which prevented him from being treated by the group as one of themselves. He had put up horizontal bars in one of the doorways at home and had spent hours in persistent but ineffectual efforts to chin himself. His failure to do so was pitiful because of the intensity of his emotional reaction. He kept saying, "I have got to learn to do what the boys do. I have got to be able to be with them." He talked continually of a certain gang of boys, of the way they exchanged their books and the activities he carried on with them, but these boys only teased him and played tricks on him.

They were rather a rough lot, this gang; for the past two years Harold had been trying his best to be "tough," and he had allied himself with the rougher element in the school because, as his mother put it, "he thought boys of this type were the real he-men." Their neglect of home work and habit of laughing at their failures, their various pranks in school, had been accepted by him as constituting a model to be copied, hence his own loss of interest in his studies and resulting failure with its accompaniment of misbehavior.

In his recreational contacts outside the school Harold was no happier. He had belonged to a boy's club, but several times had got into fights with bigger and stronger boys so that the club leader, knowing that Harold could not hold his own, dreaded to have him there. From the mother's account it appeared that he had been as queer and out of place, as much teased and bullied, in this club as in school. He seemed unable to make normal play contacts with children.

Mrs. Ogden not only recounted these facts, she showed much anxiety about the situation. She had taken the boy to see the family physician, who had told her that he was bashful, that he should mingle more with other boys, that it would be better for him if he were left alone and no attention paid to his condition. Imbued with this idea, the mother expressed the wish that the school would refrain from calling any attention to the boy's peculiarities. The doctor had told her, and she and her husband both believed, that Harold would be better off if let alone, she repeated.

In reply Miss Hamilton agreed that nervous symptoms in children should not be discussed or made much of before them; but she pointed out that Harold's reactions when called upon to recite or otherwise singled out for any purpose were so extreme and conspicuous that it was impossible for people not to notice him. His bashfulness, she tried to make the mother see, was only one among many indications of his nervousness; his misbehavior in school was an expression of his fear of being considered a sissy. Since the doctor advised paying no attention to the boy's difficulties the school would try to carry out this policy, but she nevertheless felt that his condition was so serious that it would be advisable to consult a specialist.

Believing the mother to be interested, she then went on to explain the facilities for study of just such children's problems offered by a recently established psychiatric clinic, and urged that Mrs. Ogden take up with her physician the question of having Harold examined and treated there. She expressed her belief that he might be helped by the sort of treatment offered and might gradually grow to understand that there were other and better ways of becoming a man than failing in school and misbehaving.

Mrs. Ogden did not appear greatly impressed. She

reiterated her conviction that the boy should be left alone. She had been considering for some time transferring him to an excellent private school, but hesitated fearing that comparison with children from much wealthier families might be as injurious to him as comparison with his present companions. It was agreed that she would think the whole subject over and let the visiting teacher know her conclusion.

Just outside the house Miss Hamilton encountered Harold. She greeted him as casually as possible, remarking that she had been to see his mother and they had had a pleasant talk. The sudden stiffening of the boy's whole person revealed, even while he returned her greeting, how much disturbed he was by the meeting.

The visiting teacher carried away from this conversation with the mother an impression that despite the politeness shown by Mrs. Ogden and the apparent freedom with which she had talked, she would prove immovably attached to her own ideas. Reflection also led Miss Hamilton to question whether she herself had not made a tactical error in advising, thus early in the acquaintance, so radical a step as clinic treatment. Her chances of gaining an influence might have been better, she suspected, if she had confined herself in the first interview to the passive role of listener. As things were she had definitely the feeling of being up against a stone wall.

At the earliest opportunity Miss Hamilton had another talk with Harold, ostensibly with the aim of explaining why she had sought the first interview with him. He said his mother had explained this, that he now understood. The visiting teacher succeeded in getting him to talk of the boys he admired, and found that several of them were already known to her. When Harold volunteered that they were all rather bad boys she disagreed, explaining that to her they

were simply boys who hadn't learned that the best way to become a real man was to get down to work and do their best instead of failing and annoying their teacher.

Returning to Harold's own situation she spoke of the good record he had made up to the present year; there was always a reason for a sudden slump in a boy's work, she felt, and she wondered if they couldn't find out what it was. Harold had no idea. He talked more freely in this interview than in the first, but his set staring eyes and tense strained expression were still noticeable. He had great difficulty in keeping his body still and seemed to be acutely conscious of the convulsive movements that shook him.

A few days later, as the visiting teacher was passing by Harold's room, she found him sitting out in the hall. She asked no questions but sent him on an errand for her. Later she learned from his teacher that he had been behaving so badly that the other boys had asked to have him put out of the room, declaring he was "crazy." While he was out the teacher had talked to the boys, explaining that he would be better if they did not tease or pay attention to him.

After this added evidence as to the seriousness of the situation Miss Hamilton sought an opportunity to talk with the principal and explained the situation to him. It was agreed that he should write to Mrs. Ogden asking her to come in for an interview and should then urge that she seek treatment for the boy.

Before this letter had been sent, there came from the private school which the mother had mentioned a request for a report in connection with an application that had been made there for Harold's admission. The report was filled out, the visiting teacher adding a note explaining that the boy's recent poor grades were in part due to poor health and extreme nervousness.

In the light of this new development, the principal and the visiting teacher again reviewed the situation. Both felt that since Mrs. Ogden had decided to transfer Harold there was hardly a chance that she would accept advice from the school he was leaving. On the other hand the school in which she proposed to place the boy was well known for its enlightened policy, not only in educational but in social matters; it frequently referred its problem children to the clinic which the visiting teacher had recommended to Mrs. Ogden. Miss Hamilton believed that once Harold was entered there she could get in touch with his teachers and suggest the need of advising the parents to have a study made of their son. The former plan of asking the mother to call was therefore abandoned and a policy of watchful waiting adopted.

More than a month passed without any word that the application had been acted upon. Reports of very poor work continued to come from Harold's teacher. In addition, the visiting teacher learned that a new gymnasium instructor had been so impressed by the boy's lack of muscular control that she had taken his dumb-bells away from him lest he injure himself or others. Miss Hamilton decided to see his mother again. The plan of calling in the evening and thus seeing Mr. Ogden as well she rejected, as Harold would inevitably be present and would again be upset.

In this second interview little that was new was learned and no progress was made. Mrs. Ogden was fully conscious of her son's poor physical condition, indeed it appeared that she made an excuse of every slight cold or other indisposition to keep him in bed for the rest she felt he needed. He had recently been ill with grippe, and on the doctor's advice she had been especially careful to keep him quiet. She had talked over the question of clinic treatment with

her medical adviser, but he had said again that he felt the less attention was paid to the boy's trouble the better off he would be. She cited as instances of improvement that whereas Harold used to scream when Dr. Loftus entered the room he now submitted quietly to treatment, and that while he used to be afraid to go on errands for her he now went without protest.

When the visiting teacher told of the affair in the gymnasium, trying to make the mother understand how impossible it was not to notice a trouble so obvious as Harold's, Mrs. Ogden replied that he had always been awkward and uncoordinated as far as muscular movements were concerned; she thought his spasmodic movements due to mere awkwardness, not to any nervous difficulty. Miss Hamilton explained that she and the teacher had been most careful to refrain from paying attention to Harold, but pointed out how the other boys noticed and commented upon his peculiarities, making it almost impossible for the teacher to control the situation. Mrs. Ogden cited similar experiences within her own observation. Yet at the end, fully as she seemed to recognize the facts, she remained convinced that to "pay no attention" was the one remedy. Nothing was seriously wrong with Harold, she maintained; he would outgrow his difficulty. She was still hoping to hear favorably from the private school to which she had applied.

No such favorable word came, and Harold continued in the old school for another two months to the end of the year. In view of Mrs. Ogden's insistence that no attention should be paid to him the visiting teacher felt that nothing would be gained by attempting direct work with the boy at this time, and that such an attempt would be sure to antagonize the mother. There was no improvement in the general situation. One other interview between mother and visiting

teacher took place, this time at the school, to which Mrs. Ogden had come in response to a note telling of some new difficulty. On this occasion she showed much shame and apologized for the trouble Harold was causing. Miss Hamilton tried to make her see that there was no occasion for any such feeling, urging that she feel free to consult with her or with the boy's teacher at any time. On the one hand she stressed the physical causes of Harold's trouble and on the other tried to lead the mother to see that the psychological issue should be met by a series of frank talks rather than by concealment and apology. There was talk of summer plans; the family expected to go to the country where the boy would have a free out-of-door life.

Harold failed of promotion, and in the fall was placed in a private school—not however the school previously applied to, but one regarding which the visiting teacher had no information. His mother's note to the principal requesting his transfer expressed her feeling that he had received no benefit at this school, and seemed to indicate that she had felt annoyance at the attempts made to help her meet his problem; she wanted to place him "where he would be regarded as a normal boy."

* * *

So this pitiful youngster passed beyond the reach of the visiting teacher. Might another method, or a different personality, have won him and his mother and effected a change in attitudes and aims? This is a type of question which unfortunately we can never answer. We can only frankly record the worker's failure, and then briefly dwell upon certain issues raised by the story which, imperfect as it is, have made it seem worth including in the present series.

The conclusion of the narrative leaves us confronted by

the question: Will the private school that has received Harold meet his needs and solve his problem? Possibly. As every worker with children knows, a change in school environment is often among the most effective measures in readjusting a child; especially for a boy or girl of delicate physique does it often prove of great benefit to be associated with smaller groups of children in a more flexible program of work and play than that afforded by the public schools. If in the school to which Harold has gone the prevailing attitude of the children toward their work is a healthy one, with genuine interest and pride in accomplishment, and if athletics are not overstressed, the boy may revert to finding satisfaction in the use of what his record seems to show are normal mental powers.

Yet, when all has been said that can be said in favor of the handling of Harold's problem by his parents, there remains a grave doubt whether the measures taken will prove adequate. With a child whose attitudes and reactions toward life appear so essentially unhealthy, whose whole body and mind seem involved in a desperate struggle toward ends he cannot hope to achieve, one questions whether any change of environment alone can work a cure. As Miss Hamilton was well aware when she urged resort to expert advice, the fundamental causes of the boy's trouble had been incompletely explored. His original inferior physical equipment, his protest against the social inferiority resulting from it, are the obvious outstanding factors; but who shall say what others, equally destructive to his welfare, may have multiplied themselves with these?

Happily, enlightened attitudes towards children's problems are becoming more and more common in both the public and the private schools as parents and teachers organize for child study. One may hope, therefore, that if Harold's

difficulties do not soon clear up the way may open for a more careful consideration of his trouble than has yet been given it. The family physician's effort to correct the mother's habit of over-attention to the boy's peculiarities is readily understood; excessive maternal attentions may well have had a share both in making Harold what he is and in rendering him so conscious of his shortcomings. Had Dr. Loftus been familiar with the careful scientific methods of the psychiatric clinic recommended, he would perhaps have felt differently about having his young patient referred to it for study and treatment.

Waking Up

ALICE GOULD at fourteen had not yet possessed herself of a key with which most youngsters of ten are accustomed to open many doors. She had never got beyond the point where reading was a painful exercise; and if you don't know what it is to read for pleasure, quite unconscious of the mechanical process, it may fairly be said that you don't read at all. In other school subjects she was somewhat retarded, partly because of a general intelligence level which fell slightly below average, largely because of a succession of severe illnesses. She had, however, been pulled up noticeably toward the normal standard for her age during her last year in an opportunity class. Her hand work was especially good and she showed artistic ability. But all the efforts of her teacher had not availed to inspire her with the faintest glow of enthusiasm for the printed page.

A problem of perhaps even greater seriousness was presented by Alice's general attitude. She was listless and indifferent. She took little interest in what was going on

about her, was shut-in and unsocial. Her teacher felt that she needed to be "waked up."

It was with the hope that another personality might achieve such a waking up that Miss King asked the visiting teacher to concern herself with Alice. This newcomer in the school system, she felt, might well find the solution to the child's problem, since home visiting was a part of her program. For it was in the home, Miss King suspected, that the main difficulty might lie.

Alice was an orphan and an only child. She had been taken at the age of five by her father's brother and his wife, who were childless. Dr. Gould, the uncle, was a successful physician. Both he and the aunt had been pleased to have her come to them—she was dainty and attractive, very quiet and well behaved. But as she grew tall and ungainly, and as she failed to make normal progress in school, Mrs. Gould in particular began to show marked sensitiveness over the child's backwardness. This sensitiveness was rendered more acute as time went on by the growing contrast between Alice's failures and the successes of two girl cousins who lived next door. The older at sixteen was preparing for college, the younger at twelve was already in the seventh grade, while Alice had been lagging ignominiously in the fourth when she was transferred to her present class. The pride displayed by Mrs. Gould's sister-in-law in these two daughters, her constant tales of their successes, grew more and more painful to the childless woman who had hoped to find compensation in the small person she had been mothering. This much of Alice's story was known to her teacher and was passed on by her to Miss Jones, the visiting teacher.

In her first talk with her new charge Miss Jones employed certain devices suggested by her experience in the effort to find out where Alice's interests lay. Some simple tests

revealed good powers of observation; Alice gave an excellent description of a farm scene which had been worked out by the first grade in their sand table, and became interested in solving problems of practical life put to her in connection with the farm. She took this as a game and her attitude, which at first had been a bit stand-offish and suspicious, grew friendlier. It presently appeared that she enjoyed house work and sewing. She associated very little with the girls in her room, many of whom came from poor homes. She had dropped out of Sunday school because she read so poorly that she was ashamed to go.

The suggestion of a home visit brought a quick expression of alarm from Alice lest Miss Jones should see her aunt when she herself was not there. Accordingly a walk home together after school was planned for that afternoon.

The Gould home proved to be a charming new colonial cottage on a hillside overlooking a recently developed park. Mrs. Gould, an attractive, intelligent-appearing woman, received the visiting teacher with marked coldness. Her manner suggested that a visit from anyone connected with the school could only mean added disgrace, and that she would much prefer not to discuss her niece's shortcomings.

Miss Jones, however, surprised her; opening a conversation by a reference to painful issues is no part of the method of the trained social worker. She began by talking of Alice's practical accomplishments, her skill in sewing and household tasks, with a manner that assumed the aunt's pride in such talents. Mrs. Gould was manifestly pleased; her whole manner changed as she eagerly agreed that Alice had real gifts in these directions. It appeared that the girl was doing well with her music. She had no trouble at all in reading the notes, so her aunt felt that there could be nothing the matter with her eyes—possible trouble with which, as an explanation

for the child's difficulty with reading, had been suggested.

At Miss Jones's request, Mrs. Gould brought out a volume of Longfellow belonging to Alice. From this the girl read, haltingly, "The Children's Hour." Then, asked to retell it, she condensed it into two short literal sentences. "You see what a practical mind she has," commented Miss Jones; "Not everyone could tell the story in so few words." Mrs. Gould beamed with pleasure. What Alice needed, it was pointed out, was practice in reading and encouragement. After considerable discussion of the situation, Mrs. Gould agreed to spend half an hour every afternoon in listening to Alice read aloud. Apparently it had never occurred to her that she herself could thus help in the solution of her niece's problem. She had been a competent business woman before her marriage; teaching and child psychology had been quite outside her realm.

Another topic touched upon in this conversation was that of Alice's possible future career. The child had never pictured herself as anything but a business woman like her aunt, and had been entirely at a loss to see how she could prepare herself for office work. Miss Jones suggested the possibility of work with small children—Alice was devoted to youngsters of the kindergarten age; or specialization in domestic science. These new ideas fairly startled the girl out of her habitual lethargy; it was as though windows leading to strange new vistas had suddenly opened out from a familiar room.

After this home visit Alice reported every week to the visiting teacher. She practised reading regularly with her aunt, and in an astonishingly short time showed such marked improvement that she began to do her share of reading in the general school exercises, even taking part in a play at the Christmas celebration, much to the surprise of her

classmates. Soon after came her happy announcement that she had read "Ann of Green Gables" during the holidays, and had enjoyed it.

Beginning with the new term Miss Jones had Alice report at the same hour with a number of other girls who also needed waking up, and welded them into a little weekly class in world events. Each girl was responsible for bringing in one story a week of some important happening or phase of living in a foreign country. Miss Jones herself stimulated them by telling tales of high adventure in distant lands, figuring such heroes as Livingstone and Dr. Grenfell. The girls were to get their material from books or magazines, or from conversation with their elders.

After some weeks of this exercise, Alice one day brought in a story about the stamping out of malaria and yellow fever in the Panama Canal Zone. Her uncle, it appeared, had become interested in the mental awakening of his niece. He had set her the task of doing a certain amount of newspaper reading every day and reporting on it to him at dinner time. Alice was made to feel that this was of value to him, and her pride and pleasure in her task were evident.

No less encouraging were the signs of social awakening in this shut-in listless child. Her manner took on a new liveliness and her relations with her classmates became friendlier. She began to take an interest in her appearance, and asked her aunt if she might have her hair bobbed.

* * *

The new phase of Alice's existence which opened thus propitiously has continued to unfold itself. She has been making a good record in the domestic science department of junior high school. The future now holds many possibilities

for this girl who less than two years ago could see nothing before her but a struggle to fit herself for work in which she felt doomed to failure.

The Two Jims

THE visiting teacher was coming down the hall one day in January as the children trooped in from recess. She heard her name, and turned to see Miss Miles, the fifth-grade teacher, beckoning to her from the classroom door.

"Oh, Miss Montgomery! Please come and look at Jim and tell me what's the matter with him. He's the worst boy! He's fifteen, and he doesn't know anything and he's so stubborn. There he is—in the back seat by the window. 'Jim,' she called out, 'Open that window.' "

To Miss Montgomery, standing in the doorway, came the thought, as the boy sullenly obeyed, that Jim on a high school foot-ball team would be a figure to be respected, but that Jim crowded into the back seat of a fifth-grade room made but a sorry picture.

"Could you spare Jim for a half hour?" she asked.

In the office, helping the visiting teacher to rearrange furniture and hang pictures, Jim's face lost its scowl. He was strong and willing, quick to catch and carry out a suggestion. Miss Montgomery's hearty words in appreciation of his help brought a different look into his blue eyes.

Jim had been known all through his school career as a troublesome boy who was very dull and slow. However, none of his teachers, when questioned, could remember any special pranks nor had they any definite report to make except that he was frequently a truant, so that he was apparently not so actively bad as some. On one memorable occasion the truant officer caught "the gang" and brought

them back to the principal. Much to the latter's amazement Jim cried when he talked to them and seemed much disturbed that he had been so bad. This made the principal feel that there were possibilities in the boy if he could be rightly influenced. He was setting a bad example for Charlie, his younger brother, who was more promising than Jim, although he also was backward.

The boy's home, visited the next day, proved to be a tiny cottage on the outskirts of town. Mrs. Donohue, a widow, was a neat, attractive, refined little woman. She worked out by the day, and accepted every odd job that came her way, feeling that she must miss no chance to earn. She managed to keep a very neat home for her two boys, but was obliged to leave them alone a great deal. This, she realized, was an undesirable state of affairs, but she saw no way of bettering it. Life was hard enough for her now, but was peace itself compared to what it had once been. "Old Jim Donohue" was well known to the police and welfare workers of the city. His drunkenness and abuse had made conditions in the home intolerable, despite the efforts of his faithful, hard-working wife. Her friends had breathed a sigh of relief when pneumonia removed him from the scene, nine years before the date of this story.

According to mental tests, which were now given, young Jim was a very dull boy. He was slow, had a limited vocabulary, and was weak in reasoning. He however took a keen interest in the various performance tests given him and showed both speed and accuracy in them. He had small ability or interest in academic work, and for several years past his teachers had shown little patience with him. His last teacher had known "Old Jim" when he was a boy, and "Knows Jim will be just like him, so what is the use of wasting time on him?"

Brookfield's school system afforded no opportunities in the way of special classes or vocational schools into which Jim might fit. The visiting teacher knew, however, that the school principal was to be counted upon for help once he understood the problem, and took pains to explain it to him with great care. He at once arranged to give the boy a period of special coaching each day. Soon it appeared that Jim was really interested in geography, and that he had ability in map drawing.

The visiting teacher also arranged to have Jim made special messenger and charged with the duty of conducting children, every week, to the dental clinic for examination. He did this well and enjoyed the responsibility.

Jim's needs were talked over with the secretary of the Y. M. C. A., and presently the boy was introduced there and joined a gymnasium class.

Slowly Jim's school work grew stronger. There was a marked improvement in his appearance. March brought his sixteenth birthday. Jim had intended to celebrate this event by saying farewell forever to school life. Instead, he announced that he had decided to finish out the year.

It was through no fault of his that this resolution was not carried out. Early in the spring Mrs. Donohue suffered a stroke of apoplexy and lived only a few hours.

An aunt, recently widowed, who owned her home in a nearby suburb, took the boys in. She had a tiny independent income, and did some expert sewing, but it was necessary for Jim to go to work at once. Mrs. Grant was a sensible kindly woman. She had observed the improvement in Jim during recent months, was genuinely interested in him, and meant to give both nephews a good home.

Jim obtained a job in a down-town office and came to say good-bye. His whole manner and bearing showed a radical

transformation in his attitude toward school. Though he was leaving without having fulfilled the academic requirements, it was clear that he felt he had made good in something at least, and that he at last realized the value of an education. He expressed a determination to keep his young brother in school. This was fine, but as the visiting teacher well knew big brothers do not always make a success of influencing their juniors. She suggested that in his efforts to help Charlie he rely on example rather than precept. Jim saw the point, and promised to follow her advice.

After Jim went to work, Charlie fell into the way of stopping at Miss Montgomery's office from time to time to give her a message about his brother's success in his job. The youngster did this with the air of one telling of some important personage, so that the visiting teacher received the impression that Jim was keeping his word about setting an example.

* * *

Dull boys who are bored and restive when forced by a compulsory school law to spend their days in academic work are to be found in the grammar grades of every city, town, and village in the country; they constitute one of the omnipresent problems of the public school. Jim Donohue is an interesting example of the type at its purest, free from the complications of any definite delinquent trend. The success achieved in transforming his attitude, in changing him from a trouble-maker into a useful member of the school community, shows that this trick can sometimes be turned even in a school of the most conventional type, if there is sufficient good-will, ingenuity, and willingness to experiment.

This comment is of course not meant to suggest that any community can afford to delay the process of transforming

its conventional schools into institutions which shall meet the needs of all types of children. Obviously, the number of dull boys whose problems could be solved by such special adjustments as were made in Jim's case would be exceedingly limited. For many boys and girls the first step to a solution of their problems is the warm personal interest of someone who sees them not as mere obstructions, as snags in the smooth-flowing stream of academic progress, but as individuals possessed of points of view and potentialities of their own. Yet in most cases insight and sympathy need to be supplemented by revised curricula and by the supplying of new interests. Long-continued habits of failure resulting in confirmed grouches, if not in active rebellion against authority, often yield slowly to far more radical treatment than was applied in Jim's case.

A special danger more commonly encountered within the family circle than among teachers is that of "Knowing that a child will be just like an objectionable parent or other relative." Such prophetic croaking, with the hopelessness and indifference which are its accompaniments, can hardly fail to help fix upon its vicitims the anticipated evils. "When a parent or a teacher sees in the behavior of a child merely the reflection of something that was characteristic of some one or more of his ancestors, the immediate, determining factors are apt to be ignored; the problem is then apt to be viewed as a problem in predestination, which commonly leads to attitudes of despair and failure instead of to a calm and commonsense endeavor to correct the situation."[1] No single teaching of modern psychology has a more direct practical bearing upon everyday life than this. How are the effects of physical heredity ever to be measured

[1] "Constructive Possibilities of a Mental Hygiene of Childhood," by Bernard Glueck, M.D. *Mental Hygiene*, July, 1924, pp. 649–667.

if each generation continues to impose upon the succeeding one a psychological inheritance of dreads and despairs? Until a child's elders learn to throw their fears and forebodings overboard, or at least keep them to themselves, and so grant each new experiment in humanity an absolutely unprejudiced fresh start, we shall never know the possibilities for good in the human race.

On the Border-Line

ALTHOUGH for many years Herbert Denby had been regarded as one of the most serious problems at Blackstone School, it was not until the visiting teacher's second year of service there that she was asked to take up his case. In referring him the principal stated frankly that she had felt it useless to ask Miss Lowry's help; only a day or two before she had gone to the superintendent in utter despair over the boy's persistent misbehavior. It was the superintendent who had persuaded her that after all she ought to give the visiting teacher a chance to see what she could do with him.

On its surface the issue on which Herbert was referred was not an exceptional one. He had recently been tardy quite persistently. He had refused to stay after school to make up lessons missed, saying he had work to do at home—an excuse later found to be without basis in fact. He had also threatened to withdraw entirely, and the principal felt sure he was only waiting for his sixteenth birthday in the spring to shake the dust of school from his feet forever.

Back of the pressing and obvious issue, however, lay a long history already well known at the school. The boy had been taken when a baby by his paternal grandmother, and

had lived with her ever since. His father had gone to pieces from drink, the mother had left him, and neither parent had ever assumed any responsibility for their son. When Herbert was nine or ten his grandmother had married again. The step-grandfather had not got on at all well with the boy, who intensely resented his presence, and until his death three years later the home atmosphere had been much embittered by their quarrels.

It was during this period that Herbert had begun to have violent outbursts of temper in school, sometimes as many as three or four a day. These led to his being examined by the school psychologist, who found that he was of borderline intelligence. He was placed in a special class.

This placement proved anything but a happy one for the boy; his playmates teased him about it and he grew more and more sensitive on the subject. In the school room he continually lost control of himself, apparently without provocation. He "would pitch anything he could get hold of"; once he threw a bottle of ink at the teacher. He shouted, screamed, and swore. Close observation led the teacher to recognize an oncoming attack by certain signs; Herbert would flush deeply, then become very pale, just before going into one of his tantrums. The plan of sending the boy outdoors on an errand as soon as these signs were observed seemed to help, and gradually the tantrums were reduced in number so that he seldom had more than one a day.

Two years later, however, his condition was still so serious that he was taken to a specialist in nervous diseases, the reason given for consultation being his "vicious temper." This physician informed the grandmother that Herbert was particularly nervous and would probably go insane, while to the psychologist he stated that the boy showed "dementia

praecox tendencies." Treatment was continued for three or four months.

After four years in the special class Herbert, now fourteen, was returned to a regular grade. This move, like the earlier one, was based on the judgment of the psychologist who felt that he had improved sufficiently to justify it. Tests now indicated that he was to be ranked as a dull-normal. Since then he had done fairly well in his studies except for arithmetic and geography which he especially disliked, and had been twice promoted as a special so that he was now in the lower sixth grade. He had shown an aptitude for mechanical drawing, was most painstaking in this work. His behavior, however, as already indicated, had continued to be a great trial to principal and teachers.

Old Mrs. Denby impressed the visiting teacher on their first meeting as a decidedly queer person, and this impression grew stronger as time went on. Tall, stooped, and angular, she was careless about her person though she kept a very neat house. For several years she had been accustomed to call up the principal or teacher every little while, complaining that she couldn't make Herbert mind, he wouldn't go to school, or the like, and begging to have him taken away from her. His behavior at home was similar to that in school; he would swear at his grandmother and throw things about; he had been known to tear or cut his clothing. Sometimes he became so angry that she feared for her life. But always, before the stir caused by her call for help had subsided, she would be declaring that she could not think of living without the boy. She was a great talker, this trait, with her odd appearance, making her rather conspicuous in public places. There could be no doubt that the tales she broadcast regarding her grandson and his parents had done him a great injury, yet no one who knew her questioned her generosity and good

intentions toward him. From the beginning she was friendly and hospitable to the visiting teacher.

By his grandmother the boy was said to be conspicuously unhappy. He never sang or whistled about the house. He was bitter toward his parents, ashamed of them, and hateful to them on the occasions when they appeared at the grandmother's. He also showed extreme sensitiveness regarding a little sister, recently come to live with the grandmother, who was definitely feeble-minded; he disregarded the child's existence so far as possible, pointedly refraining from ever speaking to her. He had joined the Baptist church, but for six months past had not attended and during the same period had been staying out late nights, smoking a great deal, and drinking much coffee.

With these facts in hand, the visiting teacher conferred with the school authorities. The psychologist now favored transferring Herbert to a school where he could be tried out in various subjects. The superintendent gave the visiting teacher permission to place the boy anywhere in the school system where he would fit. Herbert's principal agreed that it would be well to try him out in a school setting where he would not be so conspicuously over-age and where there were other than purely academic activities. The head of the junior high school expressed his willingness to receive the boy and to work out for him a special course that would gain and hold his interest.

Then, after observing Herbert in his class on several occasions, and making his acquaintance somewhat casually by speaking with him about his work, Miss Lowry invited him to her office for a talk. He seemed quite surprised, almost dazed, that anyone should take an interest in him. It was evident during the interview that he had come to believe he had no mind, that he could not learn and do things that

other boys did. His chagrin over being the oldest in his class was manifest. As to possible future plans, he was clear on one point: he didn't want any more wood work, there had been so much of this in the opportunity class. He was particularly interested in drawing and electricity—and athletics. But he did not want to be limited to hand work: "I would like to really learn things," he said.

When the visiting teacher approached the question of a possible transfer to junior high the boy's face brightened for an instant, then became dark again, as he expressed the fear that he might fail there, which would be worse than continuing in his present class.

However, Miss Lowry had no difficulty in arranging for a visit to junior high, and sat through several classes with Herbert. He was especially interested in the work in drawing and design and in electricity. A course was mapped out for him the same day which included these subjects, together with hygiene, spelling, and penmanship, music, geography, vocational reading, and English. Arithmetic was not included. All the resources of his former school had failed to overcome his disability in this subject, and it seemed best to let him make a fresh start unimpeded by it. The boy seemed very happy over the new arrangement.

On this same occasion the visiting teacher made use of her opportunity to talk to Herbert about the power within each individual to accomplish what he desires to accomplish, emphasizing his opportunity to make good in the new school setting. The fact that he was the first pupil to be transferred from his school to junior high placed a special responsibility upon him, as his success or failure might determine the fate of children who came after him. She also discussed with him the importance of choosing the right sort of companions and connecting himself with organizations of fine

standards. Knowing well the influence which another's confidence in him might exert, she made him feel her faith in his ability to rise to the level of the demands which this new situation would make upon him.

Before she left the building Miss Lowry arranged with the principal to have Herbert placed with certain teachers of her choice who could be counted on to give him sympathetic understanding. She was especially eager to have him in the home-room of one teacher whose personality she felt would count for much in his development.

The transfer had not been arranged without some opposition. Herbert's teacher in the sixth grade felt that the boy was being rewarded for badness. Partly to meet this objection a try-out of one week in the old setting was given, and only after this test had been passed with an unbroken record of good behavior was the final step taken.

From the outset Herbert's adjustment in his new surroundings was satisfactory. There was indeed a complaint from the principal that on the first day he had been late, but this tardiness was due to the fact that junior high began half-an-hour earlier than the other school, a point not explained to the boy. The principal also commented that his clothes had "reeked" with tobacco, but no further complaint of this sort was made and it is known that the boy endeavored to cut down his cigarette smoking; the principal made a special effort to influence him on this point. The careful explanation to his home-room teacher of some of Herbert's difficulties helped her to make a start with him, and she soon reported that his attitude was splendid, his interest in his work keen, and his progress good. She took pains to see that he became acquainted with some of the finer boys in the school, and persuaded him to join a club she had organized. The principal soon expressed the

opinion that Herbert was going to make a good citizen, he "was coming along fine." The boy himself was satisfied in every respect, and very grateful to the visiting teacher. His grandmother declared that a great change had come over him, that he seemed happy for the first time in years, worked more willingly, came home earlier at night, and was kinder and more thoughtful of her.

With the approach of the second semester Miss Lowry was called in to help plan out Herbert's program. The boy's one expressed wish was that he might take academic subjects instead of hand work in order that he might learn as much as possible; he would be willing to take any course that the principal and the visiting teacher thought best for him. Accordingly a program was arranged in which all the work was academic except drawing. In this subject he had been making notably rapid progress; one of his designs had recently been posted as worthy of special attention. All his teachers reported his work satisfactory and his attitude fine. His promotion to the upper seventh grade took place in due time.

The beginning of the new semester brought the first real difficulty Herbert had encountered since his transfer. Arithmetic had been included among his list of academic subjects, in the hope that in the new setting where he had made such a good start a way might be found to surmount his antipathy for it. His old enemy, however, proved too much for the boy. After a week's ineffectual struggle he succumbed, and one day went home without permission. Summoned to the office, he explained that he had been ill. His teacher in arithmetic agreed that he had seemed so, but felt sure that the apparent illness had been caused by his difficulties with this subject. The resources of the particular school system for dealing with this type of problem had

apparently been exhausted, and it seemed best to meet the situation by dropping arithmetic from the boy's schedule.

It was with great regret that the visiting teacher acceded to this change, but the only available teacher had proved unequal to holding Herbert, and Miss Lowry's repeated efforts to find a tutor were unsuccessful. Wood work was substituted. The exigencies of the program made this the only subject that could be fitted into his week, and despite his earlier declared weariness of it he was glad to accept the exchange.

Meeting the visiting teacher a week later, Herbert volunteered a straightforward account of this episode, saying frankly that he did not believe he would have remained in school if he had been compelled to continue in the arithmetic class. Miss Lowry noted that on this occasion he for the first time offered his hand in greeting without waiting for her to do so, and that his look was more happy and frank than it had ever been. Of his own accord he referred to the question of what he should do when he left school and asked her advice.

Spring brought new complications. Herbert, yielding to the lure of ball games and tennis tournaments, skipped school on several occasions; but each time he admitted his fault and did his best to make up work lost. Apparently he had at least one outburst at home, for his grandmother had an attack of declaring that she could not keep him longer, that she was unable to support him and was afraid of him; but in a few days she was again asserting that she could not possibly give him up. Herbert's school record slumped in spots, and he was a good deal worried about it. He showed, however, a fine spirit: thus once he went of his own accord to the home-room teacher to explain about some writing on the walls of the toilet and ask for material with which to

remove it. Principal and teachers joined in praising him for his cooperative and helpful attitude, and Miss Lowry did her utmost to make him realize that the reputation he was earning as a good citizen was of as much if not more value to him than a record of A's would be.

Another task which the visiting teacher set herself in the spring was that of persuading Mrs. Denby to apply for the admission of her little granddaughter to a home for the feeble-minded. The child's utter helplessness and inability to protect herself was dwelt upon, and the admitted fact that after the grandmother's death there would be no way of providing for her. A point much in Miss Lowry's mind, also, was the need of relieving Herbert from the constant burden of shame which his little sister's presence in the home imposed on him. All her efforts were however vain; the grandmother wavered, hesitated, and finally declared that the child's parents refused their consent.

Herbert finished the year in good shape, with a clean record for the last month. He had apparently quite forgotten his former intention of leaving school at sixteen, and had no thought but to return to junior high in the fall. He talked over summer plans with the visiting teacher, and was encouraged by her in his favorite project of securing a job in a garage. Though he shrank from applying in person his courage was finally screwed up to the point, and he obtained the coveted post.

* * *

Herbert's story is of interest from a number of angles. It is worth noting that during his years in the special class his intelligence quotient, in tests given by the same psychologist, went up thirteen points. Without information as to the special circumstances of either test period, one may

surmise that the boy was not at his best at the earlier occasion—but this is only a guess. What seems clear is that his mentality was characterized by marked abilities and disabilities, and that his needs were not satisfactorily met either by the type of special class available or in the regular grades.

Along with this failure in educational adjustment went the special humiliation caused in the first place by the consciousness of an inferior family background and in the second by the special class placement. Apparently also jealousy entered in, as the boy saw or fancied himself displaced in his grandmother's affections by an interloper of a husband; here again he felt himself proved inferior by his inability to hold first place with the one person who belonged to him. That an inherited instability lay back of all other causes seems probable, but manifestly the role of these various factors can not be definitely assigned.

Not the least of the boy's difficulties, in the judgment of of the visiting teacher, has been the necessity of adjusting himself to the very odd and crotchety old woman who embodies for him all family ties and obligations. Old Mrs. Denby appears to Miss Lowry the more abnormal of the two, and Herbert's problem does not seem to her solved so long as he continues subject to his grandmother's whims and caprices.

The degree of success attained in adjusting this boy is of course to be measured not merely by the record of the past year as compared with that of its predecessor; all the long chain of circumstances that had made him what he was must be borne in mind, together with the uncertainties which the future holds. Nevertheless the transformation wrought in a boy supposed to be the victim of mental disease and avowedly the despair of his teachers seems noteworthy, and holds out hopes that a year ago no one who knew him would have entertained. The flexibility of the junior high school

program arranged, the open-mindedness and willingness to experiment shown by principal and teachers, have obviously been factors of great importance in bringing about this transformation. The visiting teacher's insight into the boy's needs and interpretation of them to others gave him his chance; her genuine interest in him, her sympathy and encouragement, revived in him a spirit, all but completely crushed out, which enabled him to seize that chance.

III

DIVERSE ISSUES

"In searching for causes of maladjustment in school, it should be understood that it is trifles which make children happy or unhappy. These trifles are so easily overlooked that only persons with genuine insight into child-life can discover their existence and true rôle. Usually trifles are not slight or fortuitous sources of irritation, but they pierce back to some sensitive tap-root of feeling that arouses the entire personality to pain. They touch off a complex situation, often imbedded in the family drama. The child is defenseless against this attack and responds in the only way it knows, by tantrums, running away, or other emotional release."

MIRIAM VAN WATERS, PH.D., in *Youth in Conflict*

"Parents are asking, 'What is the Intelligence Quotient? What does it mean? If it is high, am I to be elated? If it is low, am I to [be] cast down?'

"I would say that, in either case, better be calm. . . . If the Intelligence Quotient is low, better go and see the teacher and find out what she thinks ought to be done. . . . If it is high, call on her and ask in what way the child excels and plan out a course of instruction and training that will develop him fully and sanely.

"Whatever you do, don't look upon an I. Q. as fixing your child's position in relation to his life work or to his mates. . . . I. Q.'s are but indications, sign posts to guide wise teachers and parents."

ANGELO PATRI in *Child Training*

III

DIVERSE ISSUES

THE reader who has gone through the eleven preceding narratives in order may by this time have received the impression, likely to be strengthened by a glance at the later headings, that the difficulties of most problem children fall into one or another of a few leading categories. To counteract any such impression we offer at this point four stories as different as possible from one another and from those thus far presented. Each of them is representative of many similar situations known to workers in our schools. Joe Della Robbia, Lucy Briggs, and Ellen Arnold bear each a strong family resemblance to scores of youngsters who perplex their teachers and parents; Billy Mitchel is more unusual, but by no means exceptional. Ranging from very dull to very bright, these four children have little in common except that all were doing poor work and that none was guilty of any very dire misdeeds.

The problems which the visiting teacher is called upon to solve are of almost infinite variety. In this small sampling we have merely sketched a few of those commonly encountered.

"A Different Boy"

PROBABLY there is no way in which the visiting teacher accomplishes so much with so little expenditure of time and effort as in direct influence with children who are failing or misbehaving out of sheer slackness and indifference or

from excess of physical energy. The effect upon the morale of a boy or girl which is often produced by a few minutes' conversation with this school counselor seems little short of miraculous. On the other hand, no form of service rendered by the visiting teacher is so difficult to set forth in convincing terms. We have here no dramatic incident or striking outward change which lends itself to effective story telling. One week we have before us a lazy, careless youngster, annoying to his teachers and irritating to his classmates; the next we are told he has become "a different boy," attentive and dutiful. Our difficulty lies in accounting for the change, which has come about as a resultant of processes within the mind of the child quite hidden from observation.

Visiting teachers can furnish many examples of children who have been thus influenced. Perhaps Joe Della Robbia will serve as well as another to illustrate the point.

Joe was a handsome youngster of twelve, small for his age, whose failure to progress beyond the upper second grade was attributed by his teachers to sheer indifference and failure to apply himself. Also he was absent a great deal, and didn't always bring excuses. He had remained in the upper first grade three years. His present teacher didn't believe much could be done with him or his family, in her opinion rather a good-for-nothing lot. His conduct in class was quite troublesome.

The visiting teacher who had just come to Joe's school happened to be not only a lover of boys, as all good visiting teachers must be—she was also especially fond of Italians. She assured Joe's teacher that she would be delighted to take him and see what she could do with him.

In the very first conversation the two hit it off famously. Joe talked to Miss Kent as though he had known her all his life. For a little while, in response to her questioning, he

conversed about his family, then stopped and said, "You will have to come up and see them, there are fourteen of us and I can't tell you about them all." He declared that he liked school. Miss Kent suggested that his teacher didn't know that; indeed, she was quite convinced that he *didn't* like it. To this he responded, "Well, she just doesn't know, because I do." He told about his caddying at the country club and about the good times he had. Altogether the occasion was a thoroughly happy one, which the visiting teacher's admonitions regarding application to work and regular attendance in no way marred.

Miss Kent's first call at the Della Robbia home was an equally successful social event. A comfortable, neat, roomy cottage, set in a flower-grown yard on the edge of town, it was owned by Mr. Della Robbia and hadn't in the least the appearance of an abode of good-for-naughts. One big bedroom of which a glimpse was obtained was rather like an army barracks, with its rows of cots, all very neatly made, where the seven boys slept. Both parents were most cordial. The father, a handsome man of forty, clean, an intelligent talker, was amused to hear that this stranger was interested in his small son and wondered how long she would be able to stand such a "wild little boy." He insisted on showing her the horses he was raising, and on picking her some flowers. Noticing that she was suffering from a cold, he urged wine upon her as a sure cure, so persistently that she had difficulty in refusing. Mrs. Della Robbia was no less friendly. Joe was a "regular boy" she said—not exactly troublesome, but you had to keep after him to get him to accomplish anything; he was just too fond of play. She suffered severely from asthma, to such an extent that at times she was compelled to neglect the children. Neither of these intelligent-seeming parents, it appeared, could write

in English—a fact which evidently had some bearing upon the excuseless state in which Joe frequently returned after absences.

After this quick survey of the boy and his background the visiting teacher concluded that so far as she could see all that Joe needed was to have his interest in his work aroused and to have someone check up on him rather closely for awhile, and take an active interest in his progress. She accordingly gave the boy a card upon which he was to mark himself each day, holding it always in readiness to show her whenever she might call for it. He was glad to undertake this little responsibility.

Within a week of that first talk with our young hero, Miss Kent met his teacher and inquired how Joe was getting along. "Well," came the answer, "he is like an entirely different boy." This teacher, hitherto without much faith in the new experiment in social service with school children, had by this one small success been converted to a very warm interest in the whole undertaking. Miss Kent took pains to pass on to the boy at their next meeting the good report received and of course this pleased and encouraged him.

Soon Joe was given the honor of teaching a small group of his classmates, under the teacher's eye. Miss Kent, dropping in one day, found him thus engaged in one corner of the classroom. He was so afraid she wouldn't see him that he cleared his throat with vigor. His teacher complimented him before the visiting teacher, and one little girl spoke up and said "Joe is a good teacher and we like him."

All this sounds almost too good to be true. Naturally, one is prepared for the backslidings which occur in many cases of similar sudden reform. Thus far in Joe's case these have been few and slight. One day he confessed of his own accord that the teacher had been obliged to send him from

the room. Why? was naturally the visiting teacher's first question. It appeared that he had again been teaching a group, that one little girl had refused to do something he had told her, and that "he had hit her on the neck." Miss Kent asked how he would like it if his teacher hit *him* on the neck every time he did not do as he was told, a question that put him to thinking. He promised to try hard to make up for this misbehavior, and to keep up his previous good record—and he kept his word. Such other small derelictions as occurred after this affair were no more than the trivial episodes that dot the career of the average small boy. He was switched by the principal once for having got into trouble with another youngster; he was late occasionally, and blamed the family clock, as many older and wiser than he have done. The only serious difficulty with him encountered during the rest of the year was, however, too frequent absence due to diseased tonsils. Like many another parent, Mr. Della Robbia remained unconvinced, despite all the efforts of the school nurse, that an operation was desirable. Even with this handicap, Joe did his work, kept the good opinion of his teacher, and was promoted in due time to the lower and then to the upper third grade.

* * *

"What is it that makes these children over?" the visiting teacher was asked regarding Joe and a group of other youngsters. "They seem to reform their ways just to please you, because they like you. Is that all there is to it?"

Miss Kent shook her head. "They may make the first effort to do better to please me," she said, "but my work would be very poor visiting teacher work if that were all there was to it. No: I tell these children, most of whom seldom experience approbation, that if they'll only try being

good they'll find they like it. They do try, and they do like it: in the long run what keeps them doing better is that they're really happier that way. They don't realize till they've tried it how it feels to be approved and praised."

A Lengthened Childhood

LUCY BRIGGS was within two months of her fourteenth birthday when she was referred to the visiting teacher by her room teacher in the upper fifth. She was a timid, shrinking little girl, a newcomer in the school. She took no interest in her work, and was so lacking in ambition that although she was well up in reading and spelling, and could easily catch up in other things, she had asked to be put in a lower grade. Her teacher, a young woman with human insight and sympathy, had taken time to talk the situation over with the child, but felt that she had not succeeded in convincing her of the importance of remaining where she was. Lucy, though submissive, was clearly unhappy, and working in this spirit would get little good from her school experience. To Miss Loomis, therefore, who had already aided her in straightening out several difficult tangles, the teacher turned again for help.

The visiting teacher invited Lucy into her office and had a talk with her. The child's family, it developed, had recently moved in from the country so that her father and two older sisters might work in the mill. She had been accustomed to a small district school and the large city school, with its huge classes of children, all strangers to her, bewildered and frightened her. Her timidity led her to seek the path of least resistance.

Miss Loomis explained to the girl how much better it

would be for her to associate with children who were near her own age. She also pointed out that if she stayed in her present class she would get through school sooner and be able to help at home. Somehow the interest and concern for her welfare shown by this new person, or the arguments used, finally turned the trick. Lucy agreed to try the fifth grade.

Teachers of classes of forty-five, busy in the classroom until three o'clock, seldom find it possible to call upon the families of pupils. Miss Loomis found the girl's home a poor one, scantily furnished, but clean and neat. The mother, though herself entirely uneducated, was able to see how desirable it was that Lucy should do the highest work she was capable of doing, and agreed to do all she could to encourage the child. She appreciated greatly the interest taken by the school, as expressed through the visiting teacher, and would be glad to help in any way she could. Thus such bolstering as a mother's understanding and encouragement could give was assured the girl in her new resolution.

Within a fortnight Lucy had become acquainted with her new classmates, was making good in her work, and was very happy.

With the end of the semester came a report from the fifth-grade teacher that Lucy had earned her promotion but hoped she would not be advanced. Her reason was however quite different from the one that had made her, in the fall, ask to be put back. She had just passed her fourteenth birthday, promotion would mean she had completed the requirements for an employment certificate, and her father was insisting that she should at once leave school and go to work.

Miss Loomis took pains, this time, to arrive at the home after working hours. She found Mr. Briggs a most opinionated individual. He began by insisting that it was high

time he got something out of Lucy after supporting her for fourteen years. Mrs. Briggs and the two grown daughters backed up the visiting teacher, declaring that they could manage if Lucy still continued in school. An effort was made to get over to the father an appreciation of the value of education. He insisted that he had educated himself—Miss Loomis listened patiently to a long account of how he had done this, and to a full statement of his theories of education—and declared that his daughter could do likewise. The visiting teacher, however, pointed out that very few people succeeded in educating themselves. It was a fine thing, she further suggested, when fathers could give their children a better start than they themselves had received. This point seemed to arrest the man's attention. He finally acknowledged that it was a "sorry" father who would allow his child only the minimum education required by law, and promised to think the matter over. The frame of mind in which the interview left him was evidenced by a note he wrote to Lucy's room teacher—a very flowery epistle in which he thanked her for sending the visiting teacher to call.

The result of his cogitations was announced by Lucy at school a few days later. Her father had agreed to allow her to finish out the year. She was radiant over the prospect, running to the visiting teacher and throwing both arms about her in the effort to express her joy and gratitude. Her enthusiasm overflowed in similar manifestations to her room teacher, until the latter laughingly expressed to Miss Loomis the hope that she wouldn't keep any more such demonstrative children in school.

* * *

Does the gain achieved in this case seem a small one—five months more of childhood and the chance to learn, for

one girl? Those who are disposed to count it such have perhaps forgotten how much a short half-year may mean in the life of a child.

Nor does it seem a trifle that one father was persuaded to accept the principle that a child should be given more education than the law requires. There are two younger children in this family who may profit in greater degree than Lucy from the application of this principle; and who shall estimate how much a few such changes of heart, in ignorant parents, may affect community standards and the fate of the coming generation?

"Promoted" to Special

THIS may be accounted the story of a failure or of a success, according to the angle from which you view it. There is no evidence to show that Mrs. Arnold is any less unkempt, her front room any less cluttered and dust-laden, her babies any less dirty and ill-cared-for. It is fairly clear that Mr. Arnold's views on tonsil and adenoid operations have not become more enlightened or his temper any milder, though through pressure he has finally been brought to permit operations on the two little girls. Apart from this, only two evidences of improved home conditions have come to light: a repapered front room and milk for the children. For the first-named reform the visiting teacher claims no credit; some inner drive of Mrs. Arnold's own seems to have pushed her on to the performance of this arduous task of renovation. For the second, Miss Lake suspects that her urgency regarding better diet for the little girls may have had its effect, if not with the mother, then with Harley Tucker, welfare worker at the mills, who took care of the

family during the illness of the father. Certainly, Mr. Tucker was present the day she discoursed before the conference of social agencies on the children's needs. The connection between these events is however debatable, whereas the change in Ellen Arnold is a clear-cut matter of fact.

Ellen was referred to the visiting teacher on account of her extreme retardation in school work and the excessive number of absences which seemed largely responsible for it. At fourteen, after seven years of attendance constantly interrupted by illness—her own or that of other members of the family—she had only reached the third grade. The principal suspected that the fundamental causes of the trouble were neglect at home and an indifferent mother.

Miss Lake's first glimpse of Ellen was on the day of the child's premature return after an attack of tonsilitis. She had been in to see the school nurse, crying and complaining of earache. She was an undersized, underdeveloped little girl with the dull eyes and half-open mouth commonly associated with adenoids. On this particular day she was neatly dressed, though this state of affairs was far from being the rule. Her manner struck the visiting teacher as a bit evasive, but the moment was hardly a propitious one for confidences. Her mother worked out one day a week, she said; her father had regular work at the mills. She was allowed by the nurse to go home, and was absent the rest of the week.

Ellen's home-room teacher was very young, a beginner fresh from training school. The children were fussy and noisy. It was easy to see that under these circumstances the chance of awakening special personal interest in a dull pupil was slight. Ellen's next younger sister Florence, aged thirteen, was in the same room and doing better work.

A visit to the Arnold home brought little encouragement to one who would build for a better future for the children. The house, one of a long row of mill-dwellings along a dusty highway on the outskirts of town, was yardless and treeless. Its "front room" was filled with accumulated knick-knacks of every sort, all loaded with the dust of ages. An unhappy, droopy-looking chicken picked its way across the floor. Mrs. Arnold, slatternly and good-natured, nursed a sickly baby while an underfed, dirty child of four clung to her skirts. The mother was quite ready to talk so long as she was permitted to ramble on about the family ailments and the deaths of five of her ten children. A theme for which she showed especial fondness was the birth and death of an imbecile brother of her husband's. She told how Ellen and Florence had been sent to a tuberculosis sanatorium, a year or more before, how they had been homesick and unhappy and had returned before they were discharged. The doctors had been urging tonsil and adenoid operations for both girls for years past, but the father consistently refused his consent: "What God gave them at birth they should keep until they died," he declared. Mrs. Arnold herself was entirely willing to have the operations performed, but could not persuade her husband.

When Miss Lake broached the subject of the children's school attendance the mother fell suddenly silent, and the visitor's efforts to make her see the importance of keeping them well and up to the mark in their work seemed without effect.

An evening call, paid especially with the object of making the father's acquaintance, brought even more disheartening results. A rough, unkempt man, he displayed in all his conversation a striking lack of judgment, was quite violently emotional and unreasoning. When, after talk of the mills,

his work, and other topics, the visiting teacher broached the subject of Ellen's physical needs, the operation in particular, he worked himself up into a passion, pouring forth a storm of resentment mingled with curses against the tuberculosis clinic and the sanatorium. He showed indeed such blind ignorance and settled prejudice that argument seemed futile. During the tirade Mrs. Arnold and the children sat silent with a frightened expression. Next day the two little girls came with a message from their mother begging the visiting teacher not to be offended or to mind their father, "it is just his way."

"His way" was in fact familiar to most of the social agencies in town. There had even been neighborhood reports that the father abused the children, but efforts to bring the case to court had failed, the mother denying everything. The fact that Mr. Arnold was a steady worker, earning fair wages in the mills, naturally counted in his favor. When the visiting teacher brought up the family situation at a conference of agencies where common problems were discussed she was met with smiles and groans. She dwelt especially upon the poor physical condition of the little girls, but received no helpful suggestions as to ways of remedying this or other phases of the family problem.

Following upon her initial failure to influence the father, Miss Lake determined to do what she could for Ellen by direct personal work with the child and by making such school adjustments as were possible.

In view of the girl's extreme retardation, the advisability of having her transferred to the one special class for defectives which the schools boasted was naturally given early attention. The visiting teacher took up the question with the principal, who agreed that the change would be desirable if there was a vacancy. From the special class teacher it was

learned that as soon as a child now in the class could be removed to an institution there would be room for Ellen. However, the state institutions for the feeble-minded were known to have a two years' waiting list, so the prospect was not a very encouraging one. This was late in October.

Early in November the visiting teacher invited Ellen to bring her report card to the office. The child came willingly, exhibiting the card with no apparent feeling about her low grades, which included five out-and-out "failures," five "poors" and only one "good"—in drawing. Ellen said she hadn't looked at her marks, had no idea what they were until she went over them with the visiting teacher. She never did look at her report card, just carried it home for her "mom" to sign and brought it back again. However, she knew that she always failed in reading. The visiting teacher did her utmost to encourage the child to try to make a better record in the coming month.

It is interesting to observe how much a little friendly personal attention may affect a dull youngster who has never met with such an attitude before. After this interview Ellen became a daily caller at Miss Lake's office. She came sometimes to show her school work, sometimes apparently just for friendliness, for she would stand and gaze at the visiting teacher without saying a word. One day she brought a note from her mother inviting this new friend to go with the family to a church supper. The feeling that prompted the invitation was sincerely appreciated.

About this same time Ellen was weighed and found to be about five pounds under weight for her height. She and her sister never had milk to drink, she said, though sometimes if "mom" had money she bought it for the younger children. Both little girls looked thin and white. On the occasion of

her next home visit Miss Lake suggested to their mother that milk was the best food she could give them. Mrs. Arnold in reply complained of the difficulty of keeping the store bill paid.

The children's attendance had shown marked improvement for a month past, but in December their father's acute illness and removal to a hospital threw the family into confusion, and Mrs. Arnold began to keep the little girls out again. She offered as excuse first that they were so upset she didn't know what else to do with them, then that she needed them at home to look out for the babies while she went to visit her husband. She was inclined to be decidedly bitter against the school for bothering her about the question of attendance in this family crisis. Finally, the visiting teacher effected a compromise by which Ellen or her sister was dismissed early on the hospital visiting days, so that neither child need miss a whole session.

In January Ellen returned to school after the holidays with a report of unexpected Christmas joys, and with the news that all the children were now drinking milk which "mom" got at the store. Ellen's weight had dropped a pound since November, but the new dietary régime had only recently begun.

This first week of the new year brought comment, at a teacher's meeting, on the child's regular attendance, a contrast to that of previous years, and on her greater effort and increased interest in school work. Her second report card showed striking improvement. She was rated "good" on five subjects, "medium" on two, "poor" on two, and "failure" on only one.

A little later in the month the visiting teacher visited the special class. She found that a child had recently left the group, so that there was room for Ellen. This opening she

promptly reported to the principal, who agreed that the transfer would be for the girl's advantage.

Thus far the move to place Ellen in the special class had been based on her school record and general impressions of her retarded mentality; lack of facilities for psychological study in the school and community had made it impossible to apply mental measurements in her case. In February, however, the visit of a travelling psychologist from the state department of education made it possible to obtain a definite diagnosis. His mental analysis showed Ellen to be "congenitally feeble-minded," a "high-grade moron," "capable of improvement in academic work but not a restoration case." Her emotional and social reactions were judged to be normal; she was regarded as a "stable type." Transfer to a special class was advised, with "some attention to academic work but major stress on household arts." The question of institutional training during adolescence was left open, decision to depend on the possibilities of intelligent control and guidance in the home.

Even after the receipt of this report, difficulties were encountered in securing the actual transfer of Ellen to the special class. The further delay of a month in putting through this change had however at least one good result: the child's improved reputation for better attendance, effort, and school work was strengthened. It was evident, however, that she could not be promoted to the fourth grade. This certainty naturally strengthened the case for transfer, especially as Florence was doing work that warranted promotion and it was felt to be highly desirable to spare the hard-working older sister the humiliation of being left behind by her junior. Every effort was made by the visiting teacher to inspire Ellen to her maximum effort. She was included in a group whose progress was marked each week.

When she proudly displayed a spelling paper on which she had missed only five words, instead of the accustomed fifteen or twenty, she was warmly praised and told to take the paper home and tell her mother that this was what regular attendance had made possible. The visiting teacher also suggested to the child that now she should be able to help her little brother of eight, in the first grade.

February brought also the good news that Ellen had gained over five pounds and was thus rapidly approaching her normal weight.

With March came the child's third report of the year. It recorded no failures, though she was rated "poor" in four subjects. This continued good record made it possible, when later in the month the opportunity for transfer to the special class finally came, to present the proposed change as in the nature of a promotion or reward for good effort and regular attendance. Ellen was full of happy excitement over the prospect.

A few days after this long-planned transfer was actually effected the child rushed into the visiting teacher's office one morning, beaming with delight, to show the first fruits of her labors in the new class: two well-woven baskets. She wanted to buy one for "mom." She was making a petticoat, too, and "mom" was so pleased that she was in the special class. She wasn't going to miss a day.

Thus a new period opened for the little girl. In cooking, basketry, and weaving she did really well, in sewing less well, but in all her work she applied herself with zeal and was conspicuously happy.

In May the tuberculosis clinic nurse reported yet another failure to induce Mr. Arnold to consent to the tonsil and adenoid operation. The visiting teacher had by now established a more friendly relation with the father, as a result

of listening sympathetically to his complaints about his health and promising to take up with the mill the question of possible lighter work for him. She thought best not to risk this gain by further urging of an unpopular issue, and decided instead to follow a suggestion offered by Ellen herself some months earlier, that she talk to Harley Tucker about this question. "Pop will do anything Mr. Tucker says," Ellen had declared. The event proved her to be right. While the policy of bringing pressure from an employer to bear may be a dubious one in most circumstances, the condition of the children seemed in the present instance to justify the step, more especially as Florence had recently been pronounced by the clinic physician to be a "typical case that should have sanatorium care." Both little girls returned to school feeling very important as a result of their hospital experience. As school closed plans were being pushed to place Florence in a sanatorium for the vacation period and to find a place where Ellen might earn a little during the summer by light domestic service.

* * *

Two elements have apparently worked together to transform Ellen from an utterly unadjusted child, who lost no opportunity to escape from the meaningless confusion of school, into an enthusiastic pupil, eager to miss no one of the thrilling new experiences to which kind grown-ups were pointing the way. First, somebody singled her out for personal interest and attention, found time to go into her small affairs, picked out significant details that she would never have discovered for herself in the drab every day routine. Second, the experiments in application and effort which she was gently led to make brought unimagined satisfactions: the spelling paper on which she had missed only

five words was something to take home to show "mom"; her total achievement was held to justify her in assuming the lofty role of tutor to her little brother. Success, always dependent upon a definition, became hers, and as a reward came transfer to a new setting. No longer was she, with forty other youngsters, held to a strictly academic program all day long; instead, with half that number of comrades, she could settle down for a long quiet session with an understanding woman who set her new and absorbing tasks—things that she could do with her hands, things that were real, that anyone could see the use of.

The story of Ellen Arnold needs to be supplemented by a brief mention of what Miss Lake was able to do for her younger sister, Florence. This child presented at the outset the same attendance problem as Ellen and what appeared to be an only slightly less serious scholarship problem. She proved, however, to be of normal intelligence; her personal difficulty lay in extremely defective eyesight—she was nearly blind in one eye. The oculist who examined her said that he didn't see how she had got as far as the third grade. Once she was provided with glasses her work rapidly improved. Not only did she clearly earn her promotion, but she took great satisfaction in her success and was much happier socially in all her school relations.

The Arnold family as a whole will be recognized by social workers as one of a very difficult type with which they are often called upon to deal. Such parents, neither poor enough to be dependent nor cruel and neglectful enough to be counted delinquent, but so ignorant as to bring upon their offspring most of the end-results of both dependency and delinquency, are obviously in need of the highest type of educational service that the most thoroughly equipped family or child welfare agency can offer. In a community

where such agencies are unknown the visiting teacher is compelled, as was Miss Lake in this instance, to struggle against severe odds. By bringing about a happy school adjustment for the two little daughters and winning from the parents a friendlier response than at first seemed obtainable, she has not only performed definite helpful services, but has laid a foundation upon which an effort to raise this family to a higher plane of living might well be based. Unlikely as the achievement of such a result may seem in this case, transformations of the sort have been wrought, even with families where mental deficiency had played its part in producing long-standing degradation.

A Little Grandpa

NOBODY at school so much as suspected that seven-year-old Billy Mitchel was equipped with a better mind than the average boy. His room teacher, when she asked the visiting teacher to take him in hand, dwelt upon his poor work, his lack of interest, his slowness, his laziness.

Miss Gordon in her first interview with the child was impressed by his sensitive and intelligent face, his attractive personality, and his good manners. He talked well. She also noted that he was pale and "delicate" looking. He professed only a moderate interest in school. At home, he said he was compelled to get his lessons before he was permitted to play. His family had just moved to a house on the outskirts of town, and he talked freely of this new home. His father was an expert machinist.

Miss Gordon's next move was to look up Billy's school record. This showed that the boy's brief school life had been much interrupted by the frequent movings of his family. In

the second grade he had done hardly more than passing work, and was now in the duller division of the lower third, doing no better.

One striking item of the youngster's record, however, stood out. In a group intelligence test of the preceding fall he had received an exceptionally high rating—a rating equalled by less than one percent of school children all over the country who have taken such tests. The significance of this fact had apparently been entirely overlooked by the school. The test once made, the papers had been bundled up and stored away on an upper shelf. Miss Gordon arranged with a visiting psychologist for an individual examination of the boy in the near future.

Meanwhile she called at the Mitchel home—a neat, well-furnished little bungalow facing a range of wooded hills. Billy's parents proved to be intelligent and attractive young people who were concerned about their only son and talked frankly of the problem he presented. The facts brought out in this interview regarding the family background, the child's earlier history and his characteristics, helped to an understanding of his difficulties and needs.

First, he had never been strong and had suffered from numerous illnesses. Kidney trouble had been the most persistent of these. For two or three years past he had been subject to attacks of appendicitis; he had not yet been operated upon. He also took cold very easily and suffered from bronchitis. Two abscesses had necessitated the removal of teeth. Mr. and Mrs. Mitchel had been desirous for some time of consulting a specialist in children's diseases, but had not known to whom they should go. A doctor to whom they took the boy recently merely prescribed one of the familiar old-fashioned remedies and they had become discouraged. There seemed little reason to doubt that this physical record

accounted largely for the child's lack of energy and of interest in his work.

There were other factors entering into the situation, however, some of which antedated Billy's own birth. His mother had been an only child and had been kept apart from other children. She had married when very young—an utterly inexperienced girl with, as she frankly stated, no notion of how a child should be reared. She was inclined to be nervous and acknowledged that at times she was impatient. To a great extent she had repeated with Billy the errors made in her own up-bringing, dressing him in white and keeping him by himself for an unduly long period. Moreover, until lately the family had lived in apartment houses where children were few and play space entirely lacking. As a consequence the boy shrank from other children and did not know how to enter into the usual childish games. The recent move to this outlying district had been made for his benefit, and he had already been all over the neighboring hills. But there were no boys of his own age near by. He had been seeing a good deal of some little girl neighbors whose society he seemed to prefer to that of the bigger boys. He was so old in his manner and conversation that the friends of the family had given him the nickname of "Grandpa." One of these friends was accustomed to take him to call on her father; the old gentleman particularly enjoyed the youngster's mature style of conversation.

In view of this evident maturity the boy's parents had been at a loss to account for his poor school work and had felt much disappointment because of it. They had tried to force his interest, insisting that he stick to his books in the evening until he had his lessons. It was characteristic of him, they said, to sit with his head on his hand paying little attention to the work before him. Yet he was apparently

not sleepy, for if they sent him to bed he would lie awake and call to them from the bedroom. For this reason they had got into the habit of letting him sit up as long as they did.

Miss Gordon also discussed the child's diet with his mother and found that it was far from well balanced.

So friendly and open-minded was the attitude of Billy's parents that it was possible on this first visit to offer advice on certain points. Suggestions regarding more wholesome diet were made. The curtailment of study hours and the encouragement of out-door play was urged, together with the establishment of an earlier bed hour. Help in finding a child specialist who would make a thorough physical examination was promised.

Within a few days this talk was followed up: Billy was given two books, the "Health Alphabet" for himself and a publication of the American Child Health Association for his mother. The school nurse was consulted regarding physicians specializing in child health and the name of a man recommended by her was sent to Mrs. Mitchel, who promptly took Billy to see him, and at once began to follow the diet recommended with the aim of correcting the boy's kidney trouble.

In the individual psychological testing given Billy soon afterwards the findings of the earlier group test were confirmed. The boy's mental age was two and one-half years beyond his chronological age, so that according to accepted standards in this field he was to be rated as a definitely superior child. The examiner believed that his poor school work was due to a difficulty with reading, and this in turn she traced to the fact that his mother had tried to help him at home, using a different system from that taught in the school, and so confusing him.

The results of the testing, together with this explanation,

were passed on to Mrs. Mitchel when she called at the school a day or two later. It was recommended that some expert tutoring in reading be given the boy, the visiting teacher offering to arrange for it. The mother would very willingly have accepted this offer, but Mr. Mitchel had been out of work and they felt unable to afford it. Unfortunately no one who could be called upon for free tutoring was available.

On all points except this of tutoring the cooperation of the home was excellent. From both Billy and his mother came reports that he was keeping early hours. Only on Saturday nights, when he accompanied his parents down town, did he stay up late; and he declared to the visiting teacher that on these occasions he grew so sleepy that he would rather stay at home and go to bed. He began to look decidedly better, had more color in his cheeks and showed more "pep" on the playground. In the classroom his increased energy displayed itself mainly in an access of mischievousness, but fortunately his teacher proved herself able to see in this, as contrasted with his former apathy, a distinctly encouraging sign. A slight improvement in his work also took place. After considerable reluctance he had been persuaded to enter into a May-Day celebration with his class, and later he quite readily took part in a Sunday school program and a music festival. He showed lively interest and enthusiasm in reporting his various doings. At last accounts he was rejoicing in the possession of two dogs, a fox-terrier and a pup of unknown antecedents, and was finding them the best of pals. His general enthusiasm for living had manifestly greatly increased.

* * *

Obviously the change in Billy's régime has been in effect too short a time for us to judge how it will affect his scholar-

ship and general development. To make a real boy of him instead of a little old man seems the first step, and the visiting teacher's interest in improving his scholarship is secondary to that of having him become a vigorous, socially active little human unit. Happily this primary aim seems on the way to attainment. Once it is reached, ways and means of leading him to make better use of his unusual mental powers may well be the visiting teacher's next task.

Billy's situation is of interest both in its more or less typical only-child aspects and as an instance of the way in which superior intelligence may be rendered quite ineffective for practical purposes by ill-health or by faulty training. A situation in which a child so gifted is doing less than average work always calls for careful analysis. We can't afford to neglect any of that small minority of children in each generation who give evidence of exceptional ability. "The superior child is a potential asset to the community. Is it not, then, to the community's best interest to develop him to the point of fullest self-expression and greatest service? . . . School progress is checked and mental growth retarded, with disastrous results to themselves and to the community when these vigorous minds are permitted to remain idle or to work at half speed. Most careful thought should be spent upon the needs of the superior child, for by modification and adjustment of the curriculum it is possible to weave an educational program more in harmony with his mental pattern."[1]

[1] "The Challenge of Childhood. Studies in Personality and Behavior." By Ira S. Wile, M. S., M. D.

IV

QUESTIONS OF HONESTY

"'Thou shalt not' is the typical response that delinquency receives in the home, or the school, or the court. Indeed, we might shorten the phrase and assert that the customary effort to check undesirable behavior is embodied in the single word, 'Don't.' Thus to attempt to repress the tendency to misconduct by mere admonition (accompanied perhaps by punishment) savors strongly of the old drug therapy for illnesses—the symptoms, fever, etc., were then the objects of attention; the underlying pathology was not even suspected. Even theoretically we might expect failure from similar methods applied to misdoers; practically, our daily experience uncovers clearly the dearth of results from such ill-considered endeavors."

William Healy, M.D., in *Honesty*

"Wherever life studies are made of the inmates of prisons, it appears over and over again that they did not get along well in school. They were insubordinate, idle, truant, etc. . . . It would seem as if the school had the power, if it had the wisdom, largely to prevent the development of crime and criminals. . . . The school already knows too well the possible future of the boy who grows restless in the third grade, steals in the fourth grade, plays truant in the fifth grade, and becomes a general nuisance in the sixth grade. It is naïve to suppose that all that this boy needs is punishment and stringent discipline. He needs help, and help of the kind which springs not only from good will and kind intentions, although these too are necessary, but from scientific knowledge of human motives and behavior."

Elisabeth A. Irwin and Louis A. Marks, in
Fitting the School to the Child

IV

QUESTIONS OF HONESTY

OF the stories grouped under this heading the first three turn mainly upon lying, those which follow are more concerned with stealing; but in two narratives, at least, both issues arise. This is to be expected, since the child who steals is almost certain to be led on to lie in self-defense.

The defensive lie is, however, a natural product of any situation in which the young child finds himself in danger of blame. Probably few children grow up without having at some time availed themselves of this weapon. Adults who are responsible for the guidance of young lives need, therefore, to be very sure that they are prepared to deal wisely with the ever-recurring minor crises caused by this type of untruthfulness. The narratives furnish striking examples of what not to do, and illustrations of sound methods employed in such situations.

Different types of lies, less common but far more serious, are illustrated in the second and third narratives. Every observer knows what difficulty the small boy or girl who is gifted with an active imagination often has in distinguishing between truth and fiction. Under ordinary conditions, with anything like tactful handling, the fantasy-weaving stage is passed through without serious results, the child emerging gradually into the world of reality and learning to keep his romancing proclivities for his own relaxation or the entertainment of others. Here and there, however, the tendency to fabrication proves exceptionally strong, is fostered by outside influences, or occurs in a child whose emotional weak-

nesses and instabilities tend to develop and perpetuate it. The forces which go to the making of the pathological liar are obscure; but Dr. William Healy, in the standard monograph on this subject,[1] points out certain characteristics of background and mental make-up which are found with such frequency in the histories of individuals of this type as to suggest that a close connection exists. Some of these will be dwelt upon in the comments appended to the stories.

The stealing episodes which form the theme, or one of the themes, in five of the narratives are of varied types, ranging from haphazard snatching by small boys to serious offenses by adolescents. One of these narratives tells the story of a girl of exceptional personality, an habitual liar, thief and swindler, who has thus far resisted all attempts at guidance. The other four are of interest largely for their account of methods used in attempts to understand the offending youngsters and guide them into safer and more constructive activities. It is of course too soon to be sure that the tendency to dishonesty has been uprooted in these boys, but the commonsense methods employed seem thus far to have brought good results.

The family backgrounds of the five children who stole vary greatly, yet one common weakness is to be found in them all. The only respectable paternal figure which emerges is that of a step-father; one own-father had died insane after a youth spent in dissipation, two were deserters, a fourth bore a dubious reputation, the fifth was a positive menace. On the other hand, the four living mothers were doing their best to meet home obligations; however ignorant and liable to errors of judgment, their devotion to their children's interests was unquestioned. The handicaps which

[1] "Pathological Lying, Accusation and Swindling," by William Healy and Mary Tenney Healy.

the visiting teacher struggled to overcome were grave indeed, yet in none of these four cases was she wholly without an ally in the home. That most difficult of all situations, in which both parents, through indifference or criminalistic tendencies of their own, block all efforts at treatment, is not here represented; though a near-equivalent is provided by the highly respectable aunt of Narcissa Stanhope.

The visiting teachers' work with the children of this group presents no points of striking originality. Not to lose one's head over the commonplace misdeeds of children; not to cherish ill-grounded suspicions; to stimulate boys and girls to confide in their parents; to avoid so far as possible the role of tale-bearer; to explain quietly and patiently, in understandable terms, without moralizing, the reasons why truthfulness and respect for property rights should become habits in the child's life; to lead him to appreciate the true meaning of conduct of the opposite type; to stimulate wholesome, active interests which shall replace unwholesome ones; to encourage to well-doing by feeling and showing faith in good intentions—these are commonplaces of child management. If all teachers and parents practised them, stories like these would not need to be written.

The Easy Way

WILLIS AYRES told "outlandish lies," his teacher said; she found his personality a difficult one to understand. Would the visiting teacher please get acquainted with him and try to find out what lay behind the habit of lying?

To one versed in the iniquities of small boys, Willis's recent falsehoods bore no striking marks of originality. His

teacher had told him to stay after school to finish some work. He had gone home instead. Next morning when she demanded an explanation he asserted that he had suddenly become ill and had thought he ought to go right home. She inquired what his mother had done, and he replied that she had told him to take some muscular exercises and they had made him feel better. The teacher, feeling sure this was a falsehood, wrote a note repeating the tale to the boy's mother and instructed Willis to have her sign it and to bring it back next day. In the morning when asked for the note the youngster said he had lost it. His teacher thereupon took him to the principal. Another note was written which brought Mrs. Ayres to school, where the whole matter was threshed out. The teacher thought Willis's lying very serious; though this was her first experience of the sort with him, she called him a "pathological liar." The mother was much distressed. Willis's state of mind is not recorded.

Miss Earl talked to Willis. He was a chubby, round-faced little chap of nearly nine with a pleasant manner. He did not like school: "I tell you what the trouble is—it is the language and arithmetic." All his schooling until this year had been in Texas, where they did things differently. He was correctly graded according to his age, in the lower fourth.

Miss Earl believed in making even the youngest among her charges do their own thinking. "Since you know so well what the trouble is, what do you think you might do to remedy it?" she asked.

Willis thought a moment. Then, "I might go back to Texas," he suggested.

Miss Earl did not appear enthusiastic. "That looks very much like running away from a difficulty," she remarked. "Think again."

"I might change schools."

"Running away again. Besides, you would probably find the same work in a different school anyway."

"Well, I might stay at home and have my big sister teach me."

The visiting teacher shook her head. "I don't think you are very good at planning. You have given me three different plans and every one of them tells me you are a boy who likes to get out of things by running. You think again now, and find some proper way out of your trouble."

Willis thought. Finally, "I might take some work home and study it," he suggested.

Of course the visiting teacher might have put this program up to the youngster at the outset. But now it was his own plan.

After this it was easy to point out that lying was just another way of running from trouble—a very contemptible way of getting out of things. It never paid to lie, Miss Earl explained; if he kept on doing it nobody would respect him.

The visiting teacher, calling at Willis's home a few days later, found it to be a delightful one, beautifully located and furnished. Mrs. Ayres appeared to be both a charming and a sensible woman. She had been rather alarmed by the teacher's attitude toward her son's actions and wanted to know whether Miss Earl thought them indicative of a very serious problem. Willis had always before been, so far as his mother could judge, a straightforward, honest child.

Miss Earl in reply explained that Willis had done as many other children do in taking what appeared to be the easiest way out of the trouble he had got himself into. Nearly every child at some time or other tries lying as a mode of self-protection; apparently this is one of nature's methods, a crude expression of the instinct of self-preservation which in one form or another largely controls the activities of us all.

The results that follow such an experiment in escaping consequences have much to do with determining whether this way of meeting life's difficulties is to become habitual. Thus an instance like the present one offered an opportunity to put over a valuable lesson which should not be let slip. Miss Earl told of her own conversation with the boy, and explained that scholarship difficulties and Willis's indolence were apparently responsible for the initial defection which had led to the series of falsehoods.

Mrs. Ayres in return told how very seriously she had taken the matter up with her son. She was eager to work with the school in every way. As to home study, she had already several times urged Willis to bring home his books, but he had continued to "forget" them. She asked that the visiting teacher see that these books came home for the vacation period.

It was in December that the events chronicled occurred. Miss Earl followed them up by arranging to have reports made to her every week both by Willis and by his teacher. However, complaints ceased and better effort was shown from the first, so that these reports were soon discontinued with the understanding that any relapse on the boy's part should be promptly reported.

To the end of school no such report had been received. Instead, whenever Miss Earl inquired, she was told of marked improvement in scholarship. In June Willis passed into the fifth grade with flying colors. His teacher had by now decided that he was "an ideal boy." His record as a liar had receded so far into the background as to be quite lost sight of.

* * *

It is worth noting that the classroom teacher who referred Willis made no complaint of his work; to her the character

issue overshadowed that of scholarship, and the visiting teacher learned from the boy himself what was to him the underlying difficulty.

The falsehoods concocted by this youngster and the circumstances under which they were told are, as Miss Earl pointed out, fairly typical of the defensive lying common among children. Another type of liar who fabricates wild yarns from mere love of yarning, or who uses his imagination to escape from a real world that he finds too dull or too painful, would call for a different sort of treatment.

The swift clearing up of Willis Ayres' problem is of course less typical. Not all parents are so open-minded regarding the faults of their offspring as was his mother, or so ready to work with schools or other agencies for the benefit of their children. And though workers in the school may do much for unadjusted children, it is only when home and school work together that the best results are to be looked for.

A Heroine of Romance

FOR weeks the third-grade teacher at Central School had been perplexed by a series of vulgar notes and attempts at verse that had circulated in her room, all in the same unformed childish hand. Then at last, one day late in February, she caught the culprit—little Mary Fullerton, a newcomer that winter in the school.

A wild tale in which Mary figured as heroine and victim had brought matters to a climax: enticed into an alleyway by Adam, the biggest boy in her room, she had, she declared, been made drunk by him with whiskey purchased with $5 that he had stolen. The reporting of this lurid episode led to a conference hastily called at the school in which the

fathers of both children, the teacher, the principal, and the superintendent of schools participated. The story had been proved false. Mary, it appeared, had been annoying Adam for weeks by trailing him, even following him home. Her father, at the end of the conference, asked that she be sent to a reform school as he could not manage her.

These facts were promptly recounted by the principal to the visiting teacher, who had been out visiting and so had missed the hurried conference. Immediate action of some sort seemed called for. As a first step, could Mary be given an intelligence test that very afternoon?

At two o'clock there appeared at Miss Montgomery's door, with an older girl for whom an appointment had previously been made, a slender child of ten whom the visiting teacher had never seen before. Dark eyes, bobbed hair, an eager, attractive, but very pale little face, a faded gingham dress, much too short in sleeves and skirt, conspicuously thin wrists and ankles—such were the details of Mary Fullerton's appearance which first impressed her new friend.

As the three left the school building to walk to the clinic Mary insisted upon carrying the visiting teacher's brief case and took her hand affectionately. She showed herself alert to every sight along the way. When she had hung up her hat and coat at the clinic she pulled from her pocket a fragment of looking glass and an old blacking box containing some flour and a grimy bit of cotton, and proceeded to powder her nose and arrange her bobbed hair with an air of satisfaction.

During the test she appeared exceedingly nervous, in a great rush to start everything, and kept trying to peek at the record booklet to get help. Her responses were often incorrect through lack of thought as to what was wanted, her vocabulary was extremely limited. Her performance

ranked her as a very dull child, more than two years retarded in mental development.

One bitterly cold afternoon a few days later, Miss Montgomery stopped before the house where the Fullertons lived, a bare wooden structure directly on the street, and knocked at a door which opened out over the sidewalk. Mary let her into the front room, forlorn with its old and rather dilapidated furniture, its floor still wet from recent washing, its atmosphere so chilly that the visiting teacher felt no inclination to lay aside her fur coat. Back of the living room a dark disorderly kitchen could be dimly discerned; the third room, in front but reached through the kitchen, was not visible. There was no access to any yard or open space. Mary, kept home to mind the baby while her father and mother went out, had been cleaning up.

In a few minutes the parents came in; they had been to see a physician, Mrs. Fullerton not having yet fully recovered from a recent attack of grippe. She must once have been a pretty girl, Miss Montgomery thought, but was now faded, tired, and discouraged-looking. Mr. Fullerton was an intelligent-appearing young fellow who carried himself with a self-respecting air. He was evidently glad to find someone with whom he could talk over his problem.

The family, he explained, had lived on a farm until a few months ago when he had brought them to town in the hope of bettering their situation. He was pretty well discouraged by the winter's experience: there had been much sickness among them, he had earned at most $20 a week, had paid $16 a month rental, and "everything costs so in the city." An offer of a position as manager of a farm a mile from the end of the trolley line had just been made him. The salary offered was small, but he would have house rent free and all the milk, eggs, fowls, and vegetables his family could

use. Should he take it, give up the attempt to establish himself in the city?

Miss Montgomery did not attempt to answer this question for him. She listened sympathetically, observed, drew him out about the family's former life on the farm—especially Mary's share in it. Her father stated that the child loved the country and had never given any trouble at home or at school until this winter. Recently she had shown a disposition to shirk home duties and avoid helping her mother, and would slip away at every opportunity, even sometimes after her parents thought she was in bed, to go to the movies. She had told various yarns, mostly about being invited to shows and parties or being kept after school when she was really playing or at a movie.

During the next two days the visiting teacher made a point of talking again with Mary, drawing her out about what she had enjoyed most in her life on the farm and what most in the city. There was much talk of the pets she formerly had, of the little girl who lived on the next farm, of their playhouse in the orchard and the wonderful time they used to have making pies on a sandbank. Not much probing was required to ascertain that the child was at present movie-mad. Cut off from all her accustomed opportunities for healthful recreation, with no outlet for her abounding energies except helping her mother in the house and caring for the baby, and over-stimulated by cheap shows, she had taken to imagining herself as the heroine in various romances suggested by those she had seen upon the screen. Reviewing the situation, the visiting teacher came to the conclusion that what the child needed was a fresh start under different conditions. If she could be replaced in a farm setting and if her parents could be stimulated to more intelligent oversight of her free time, the problem might be solved.

Having come to this conclusion in her own thinking, Miss Montgomery revisited the home and talked again with the father. Together they went carefully over the financial aspects of the pending offer of the farm position, and considered the effect the change would be likely to have on Mary. The dangers of the child's present life were carefully pointed out to both parents, and the father's response was especially satisfactory; he promised his aid in every possible way. Such doubts as he had cherished about the wisdom of accepting the farm offer were dispelled, and he started off to find the man who had made it and complete arrangements.

Within a few days the move was made. Miss Montgomery had a last talk with her young charge in which she sought to influence the child to be more helpful in the home. She told Mary some of the stories in Hallock and Winslow's "Land of Health,"[1] and tried to set before her, in a way to interest a child of her age, some of the principles of good housekeeping. Mary enjoyed the stories, for example, Sir Cook's talk on how food is made, and the chapter on keeping clean, and repeated delightedly some of the health verses. She showed real eagerness to learn, and Miss Montgomery hoped that she went home with a determination to do her best. Mary begged the visiting teacher "not to tell my new teacher what a bad girl I have been," and Miss Montgomery's promise seemed to give her much joy.

Although the school to which Mary took her transfer was outside the field covered by the visiting teacher, Miss Montgomery took pains to call up the principal and tell him of this new pupil coming to him and of her own special interest in the child's progress. Mr. Fullerton of his own accord reported by telephone that Mary seemed happy in the new home and renewed his promise to do his best for her.

[1] "The Land of Health," by Grace T. Hallock and C.-E. A. Winslow.

He asked and received permission to keep the child out of school for a few days until the roads, heavily drifted with a new fall of snow, should be passable. After this, active work on the problem was of necessity dropped.

Two months later, however, Miss Montgomery set out from the end of the trolley line, one lovely spring afternoon, on a follow-up tour.

First she visited the school. The principal gave an excellent report of Mary's work and conduct. Indeed, this new observer expressed a wonder as to how the visiting teacher had ever come to interest herself in such a perfectly good little girl as this—a wonder which Miss Montgomery, remembering her promise to Mary, took pains to avoid satisfying in any detail.

Mary was at home, apparently well and happy with her life out-of-doors. Her parents said she seemed contented, helped her mother willingly, and took a keen interest in her school. Mr. Fullerton showed appreciation of the help given in straightening out the child's difficulties, and asked if he might call upon the visiting teacher in case any trouble with Mary should arise later.

More than a year has since passed without any such call for help. In view of the cordial understanding with Mary's father the visiting teacher feels sure that his silence is to be interpreted as indicating a continued happy adjustment for the girl. Whether this state of affairs will prove permanent no one of course can predict. Adolescence, with all its confusing new sensations and provocations, is still ahead, and Mary's mental equipment for meeting its problems is far from a strong one. All one can feel sure of is that the first known crisis in her life has been successfully met.

The accusation brought by this ten-year-old child bears a marked resemblance to some of the false accusations by pathological liars cited by Dr. Healy.[1] In particular, the complete disproportion of the lie "to any discernible end in view" suggests that it may belong to this class. On the other hand, we have the statement of this authority that "such lying rarely, if ever, centers about a single event; although exhibited in very occasional cases for a short time, it manifests itself most frequently by far over a period of years, or even a life-time." If the evidence of Mary's father and of the principal in her present school is to be trusted, this child's lying has been confined to a brief period. Altogether, in view of Mary's youth, one is rather disposed to regard this accusation, with the other fabrications of the winter, as a hangover from the fantasy-weaving of early childhood, stimulated anew by the exciting scenes followed across the screen. Time alone will prove which interpretation is correct.

It should be noted that the story as it comes to us is somewhat sketchy and probably incomplete. The earlier vulgar notes and verses perpetrated by Mary had been destroyed and were never seen by the visiting teacher. This type of output naturally suggests an over-active interest in sex, but no such interest, and no record of early sex experiences, came to light in this case. If by chance some such explanation lurks in the background, the happy results following upon the change in the child's environment are all the more noteworthy. To the student of case work it may seem unfortunate that the situation moved too rapidly to admit of following up all the clues brought to light by the visiting teacher's study. It is obvious, however, that with the evidence clearly favorable to the influences of a

[1] See footnote, page 144.

country life she could hardly favor a decision on the father's part which would hold the child in an environment that had proved so dangerous to her as the present one.

Running to Waste

NARCISSA STANHOPE was one of those children who seem born with a passion for the lime-light. A demure and docile exterior veiled a spirit avid for attention and admiration: attention first and foremost—admiration if possible; but even disgrace was preferable to disregard. She would walk down the aisle in the assembly room at school with an air of such conspicuous meekness, such nun-like sanctity, as to focus every eye upon herself. Her fertile imagination devised more ingenious schemes than one would suppose any little girl could put into execution, but Narcissa did her best to keep up with it. Abetted by fate, which posed her against a home background peculiarly fitted to bring out her talents as a comedienne, she had before she was twelve established a reputation for herself in the Plantville schools that for picturesqueness and variety could hardly be matched.

Narcissa was an only child and an orphan. Her father had been the ne'er-do-well son of a prosperous man who as lawyer, judge, and member of the state legislature, occupied a position of no little local eminence in a New England state. After a brief career of extravagance and dissipation, the young man had died in a hospital for the insane while his daughter was still a baby.

Narcissa's mother had been a clever and charming young woman. She was the daughter of an artist who, though somewhat temperamental, had, as illustrator and cartoonist,

achieved considerable reputation, had married a sensible woman and maintained a comfortable home. Both parents were dead when Mrs. Stanhope, returning to her native town in the middle west after her husband's death, settled down there with her baby daughter. Mr. Stanhope, senior, furnished her with a liberal allowance for the child and this she endeavored to supplement by giving music lessons. She was talented but lacked persistence; was gay, impulsive, warm-hearted, and emotionally unstable, with a taste for creating theatrical effects which led her to weave highly colored yarns for the fun of startling the neighbors. This tendency, linked with the fact that she was always surrounded by hosts of men friends, created not a little gossip. This was mostly of a harmless character; from one source, however, it was reported that she had lived a sexually irregular life, had drunk more than was good for her, and when intoxicated had been careless as to what she let her small daughter see and hear. She died when Narcissa was ten, and the child was turned over to an aunt of her mother's, a widow more than eighty years of age who had long been a prominent and more or less influential figure in the town.

This aunt, Mrs. Shepard, lived with an unmarried sister-in-law in a comfortable old house which on account of straitened circumstances they had some difficulty in keeping up. The allowance from Narcissa's grandfather, continuing to come regularly, was thus a distinct boon, and helped compensate for the worries which the child's presence in the house soon began to bring upon her elderly relative.

Even before her mother's death Narcissa had become a problem. When only nine she had been reported to a social agency with a group of other little girls and boys who were indulging in sex practices together. The agency had gained Mrs. Stanhope's consent to placing Narcissa in a special

boarding school, but this consent the mother had later withdrawn. The family was said to have been much upset by the investigation made at this time. A tendency to dawdle and dream over her work and to stir up disorder in the classroom had since been noticeable in Narcissa.

It was when the girl was twelve that the visiting teacher made her acquaintance. The reputation which Narcissa had by this time made for herself in the school was based mainly upon her extraordinary record for lying. The falsehoods she told were not the mere ordinary defensive lies of childhood, but elaborate fabrications, concocted mainly with the aim of magnifying her own importance and getting her own way. She had represented herself as a persecuted heroine suffering from the cruelty of a hard-hearted aunt; she had posed as a literary genius, telling her teacher that several books of hers had already been published; she had called up her great-aunt on the telephone and, pretending to be one of the teachers, had asked if she might take Narcissa home with her to dinner—this being a trick to cover a visit to the home of a friend of whom the aunt disapproved. An amusing feature of this last affair was that old Mrs. Shepard had unburdened herself, over the telephone, of some of her anxieties in regard to Narcissa, especially dwelling on the fact that she found it difficult to believe the child's stories, whereupon the supposed teacher had responded, "How shocking! I shall certainly try to use my influence with her."

A series of such episodes had led, shortly before Miss Richards came to town, to Narcissa's being taken to a psychiatrist in the nearest large city. An interested member of the school staff had persuaded Mrs. Shepard to consent to these visits and had done her best to win Narcissa's cooperation. The child had never given her confidence to the

physician, and it had proved impossible to make any impression upon her. Nevertheless, for the better part of a year following this consultation she had given comparatively little trouble in school, so that the visiting teacher had not been called upon for active service with her.

A situation of comparatively recent date, not directly connected with lying, then led the principal to ask Miss Richards to take up Narcissa's problem. The girl was doing poor work—quite unnecessarily, it seemed, as on psychological examination the year before she had been found to be definitely superior in general intelligence, with an excellent vocabulary, good reasoning ability, a good memory, and some artistic gifts. She had been impudent and defiant to her teacher. She stayed out of school a great deal, frequently returning without an adequate excuse. She was a most upsetting element in the classroom—chewing gum constantly, bringing candy and passing it around, throwing paper wads, making faces, waving at passers-by in the hall, and writing notes to boys. One such note, recently intercepted, told the youth addressed how much she loved him and urged him to be sure to come to the movies so they could "hold hands and do other things." It appeared that she attended every new picture at the Plaza Theatre and made herself conspicuous there by her boisterous manners; once recently she had been seen sitting with her feet on the back of the seat in front.

Another line of conduct which had lately been causing anxiety at the school had developed in connection with a drive for relief in a mine disaster that had occurred near by. A number of young girls had helped in collecting funds, and it was reported that Narcissa had continued her collections after all envelopes were supposed to be turned in, and had kept what she gathered for her own use. A habit of helping

herself to forbidden articles of food and to small sums of money found lying about the house had even before this been reported by the aunt.

Such were the outstanding points in the history of Narcissa Stanhope when the visiting teacher took up her problem. It will be seen that Miss Richards had access to a fairly voluminous mass of information. Not only were the experiences of the school staff with the girl and with her aunt made known to her, but she had read the history gathered by the social agency at the time of the early sex affair. One point especially emphasized by those to whom she applied for light upon the situation was Narcissa's inaccessibility to influence: social workers, teachers, the psychiatrist—all alike had failed to obtain the slightest hold upon her. For this reason, contrary to her usual procedure, the visiting teacher decided not to attempt at first to deal with the girl herself. Anything in the nature of a direct attempt to gain her confidence seemed doomed to failure, while the possibility of promoting a more normal recreational life for her was ruled out by the complete absence, in school and community, of any organized activities which might appeal to her. Work with the relatives toward the control of the environment seemed the only hopeful course; though here again Miss Richards was warned that extreme care must be taken in approaching the family because of the unfortunate impression made upon them by the early investigation.

The talk which the visiting teacher now had with Narcissa's aunt brought fresh revelations.

This first home visit was made by Miss Richards in company with a teacher who already knew Mrs. Shepard and who had been invited to call to consult with her about the girl's recent misdeeds. The house, high-ceiled and dingy,

its large rooms crowded with heavy pieces of stuffed furniture and old-fashioned bric-a-brac, struck Miss Richards as being far from a cheerful abode for a young girl, while the two old women, with their talk of by-gone family glories, seemed most unfitted for dealing with the very up-to-date problem on their hands. Mrs. Shepard in particular overflowed with accounts of the days when she had taught art in one of the large women's colleges; her vocabulary was noticeably wide and varied, and, taken with her impressive manner, seemed largely to explain the regard in which she was held by her fellow-townsmen.

Narcissa's aunt was also, it appeared, a confirmed spiritualist. She declared that Narcissa was "psychic," that the child went into trances and told her things that had happened before she, Narcissa, was born. This made her peculiarly hard to deal with: she was "half flesh and half spirit," her aunt said.

It was evident enough that the girl was too much for the old lady, who in spite of a long experience with her falsehoods was still frequently a dupe. For example, during this visit Mrs. Shepard inveighed against the school for keeping Narcissa so often until five or even six o'clock. It was easy to prove that the girl had never been kept so late and that all told she had been held after school less than half a dozen times during the year. Miss Richards arranged with Narcissa's teachers to notify Mrs. Shepard by telephone every time they kept the girl in, so that unless thus notified she might know that her niece was leaving school on time.

The picture theatre situation was also talked over with Mrs. Shepard. She admitted her inability to restrain Narcissa from going. When it was suggested that she accompany the girl some evening so that she might form a

notion of what Narcissa was constantly seeing, she threw up her hands in horror. She had been all her life an artist, a worshipper of beauty; was she to subject herself to such a contact with the vulgar and tawdry?

Mrs. Shepard, in short, was unable or unwilling to work with the school toward a better control of her niece. Her conception of cooperation led her, when the visiting teacher next called, to pour out her latest suspicions and demand her visitor's aid in verifying them. Was there such a person as "Mrs. Murphy," who according to Narcissa had invited her to a party? Who was "Sally Pendleton," with whom Narcissa claimed to have been out several times lately? Had a certain teacher taken Narcissa with a group of girls on a hike the previous Saturday?—and so on. The aunt's concern over the situation increased as time went on until one day she fairly wrung her hands, pacing up and down in her agitation, and exclaiming, "I don't know what to do with that girl!"

Miss Richards thought this a good opening for a question she had been wanting for some time to propound. She asked why Mrs. Shepard didn't put Narcissa in a boarding school, or consult the girl's grandfather. In a burst of frankness the old lady answered, "If I did that he wouldn't give me any more money to take care of her."

After this conversation it was decided to cease making home visits. Not only was nothing being gained, but Narcissa herself had become so resentful of the attempt to supervise her movements that she had begun to talk of how she hated the visiting teacher. In consultation with the principal it was agreed that Miss Richards should see a woman member of the school board who was connected by marriage with Narcissa's mother in the hope that she might be able to furnish names and addresses of out-of-town

relatives. It was felt that only a radical change in environment could possibly prove effective with the girl; that if her grandfather could be persuaded to remove her from Mrs. Shepard's custody and place her in a suitable school, she might be diverted from the dangerous path she was following.

The woman in question was interviewed. She was concerned about Narcissa's situation and disposed to help, and after some time succeeded in obtaining the address of the girl's grandfather, and that of a maternal uncle. Both were so far from the scene of action that visits could not be made, and the problem of how to communicate with them had to be solved. It was felt unwise to write directly lest fresh trouble be stirred up. After some correspondence with a social organization in the state where the grandfather lived, the mission of interviewing him was entrusted to an agent of this society, and a careful letter was written explaining the nature of the problem.

Fate however interfered with the carrying out of this project, for the old gentleman was found to have just died. He had left a sum of money in trust for his granddaughter, but who her guardian was the agent was unable to ascertain. The uncle, too, was not to be found at the address given. So months of effort to reach these relatives came to naught.

Meanwhile Narcissa's misdeeds had continued to pile up. She persisted in her inattention, poor work, and misbehavior in school. Notes to school boys and flirtations with them at the movies had led on to affairs with grown men whom she approached in the picture theatre or who took her automobiling with another youngster of her age. She was known to have been collecting money for a local organization which had not been making any general appeal for funds, and had sold tickets for a ball, never turning in

what she received. That she was a successful saleswoman was evident, for when a Christmas play was put on by the junior high school she attended she sold more tickets than anyone else, winning a prize. One of the teachers had recently gone into a grocery store near the school just as Narcissa was leaving with some oranges she had bought. The grocer had remarked, "That little girl comes in almost every day with a dollar bill." A women's club meeting was held at Mrs. Shepard's, about this time; Narcissa helped take care of the wraps, and one of the members after going home missed a purse containing a bill and some change. The aunt had confided to one of the teachers her anxiety over the pieces of silk underwear that the girl was constantly bringing home. Narcissa declared that she found these articles under the verandah, that the dog must have dragged them in and left them there. At first, as they looked somewhat bedraggled, Mrs. Shepard accepted this explanation; but recently several obviously new and quite fresh garments had been brought home with the same story. Mrs. Shepard was at her wits' end, not knowing how to check up on the situation.

Thus, nearly a year after Miss Richards undertook to help Narcissa nothing had been accomplished; indeed the prospect before the child looked even darker than before.

Soon afterwards a report came from one of the teachers which cast an interesting side-light upon the situation. At recess one day this teacher had heard a conversation which Narcissa and some girl friends were openly carrying on. Narcissa talked of "her hero," and when challenged to reveal his identity gave his name and address in a fashionable quarter of a nearby suburb, and declared that she had been going to parties at his house and that he drove a Pierce-Arrow. That afternoon when the teacher asked her to stay

after hours to make up some work Narcissa wept, declaring that Reginald, the alleged "hero," was waiting for her with his car. Her teacher was inclined to doubt this statement, whereupon Narcissa told her to look out and she would see a Pierce-Arrow in front of the school—and there, sure enough, was such a car. The teacher then tried to reason with the girl, telling her she was too young to have a "hero," but Narcissa merely laughed and said, "So you're going to lecture too. That's the trouble, no grown-up person ever understands young girls and all they do is lecture."

This conversation, repeated to the visiting teacher, set her to thinking back over the work of the past months. She had not lectured the girl, but neither had she gained her confidence. By general agreement she had been centering her efforts on what now proved to be a hopeless struggle to accomplish something through the relatives. Should she abandon this line of endeavor and try to get better acquainted with Narcissa herself? Might it be possible even now, through a deepening friendship with the child, gradually to lead her to understand why adults were always "lecturing"?

The first step toward reestablishing friendly relations was easier to take than Miss Richards anticipated. She approached Narcissa in school with a request for help in getting up some posters. The girl seemed delighted at the compliment to her artistic abilities and not only produced the designs asked for but assured the visiting teacher that she would be glad to help in such ways at any time. Her grudge of the winter before had apparently been forgotten.

Since this opening friendly contacts have been frequent, usually in connection with some school project or other. Miss Richards carefully avoids anything that savors of lecturing or moralizing; she makes it a principle never to be

surprised or shocked at anything she hears. There are, as she points out, plenty of people who react to the girl's flippant talk in the traditional manner; indeed, if shocked responses and scoldings could have wrought a cure, Narcissa would by now be a model child. Whether the new type of approach will lead to any better results is of course doubtful.

A recent episode illustrates the present relation between the visiting teacher and her young friend. "Slam books" have of late become the fashion in this school. One day a few weeks ago Narcissa showed hers to Miss Richards. A page of the large blank book was devoted to each member of the class; on that page the other members had entered any criticisms or comments they chose. Narcissa was much annoyed because someone had declared her to be "conceited" and had said she was "always acting." Miss Richards, glancing down the page, noted that another classmate had asserted that the girl went on "necking parties." "Necking parties?" queried the visiting teacher, "What are they, Narcissa?" "Oh, you are so ignorant!" rejoined Narcissa in her most worldly-wise and condescending manner. "Let me see"—she pressed a finger to her forehead, concentrating dramatically on the effort to find an equivalent term—"Probably in *your* day they were called 'wooing parties'."

The chance that anything helpful will come of this recent attempt to get better acquainted is unfortunately lessened by the fact that the plot in which Narcissa has been involving herself has continued to thicken. Nothing of note has occurred in the school for months past; but well-authenticated reports have been received of a night spent away from home and of various stealing and swindling episodes more serious than any in the past. The visiting teacher continues

her effort to become better acquainted with the girl while she pursues what seems the only possible policy, one of watchful waiting until an opening occurs which may enable her to place Narcissa either in a private school or in a well conducted public institution.

* * *

Those who read this story may well wonder why no such result has yet occurred; it is indeed astonishing that such a series of irregularities, extending over several years, and widely known in the community, have brought no public action. The explanation apparently lies largely in the long-established social prestige of Narcissa's aunt, and in the attitude which the old lady assumes in the various crises that arise.

Take for instance the question of school attendance. When absences are called to Mrs. Shepard's attention she will declare that she knows nothing about them; but after Narcissa has talked with her she is likely to back her up with an excuse. The possibility of bringing the girl to court on a charge of truancy has been considered and abandoned because of this obvious unreliability.

Again, the question of bringing a charge of improper guardianship against the aunt has been considered. Some months ago, the visiting teacher discussed this possibility with the head of the social agency interested at the time of the early sex affair. This executive as the result of many years' experience in the town expressed the opinion that while such action might succeed with almost any other type of individual it would fail with Mrs. Shepard. The old lady's impressive vocabulary and manner, backed by her ancient prestige, would inevitably overawe the court.

As to the astonishing way in which the townsfolk continue

to permit themselves to be taken in by this budding adventuress, two explanations are offered. On the occasions when a particular theft is brought to the aunt's attention she pays for the article; a recent case in point is that of the proprietor of a shoe store who pursued Narcissa on the street, demanding that she return to him a new pair of pumps she had just walked off in; a policeman, coming up, settled the point by advising the man to present his bill to Mrs. Shepard. Quite another explanation holds good in such cases as that of the individual for whom Narcissa sold tickets, pocketing the proceeds; those familiar with the situation feel that unwillingness to acknowledge himself the dupe of a mere child accounts for his failure to bring action, and that a like unwillingness explains the inaction of others in similar circumstances.

Turning from these external aspects of the problem, what shall we say of Narcissa herself, as an individual and as a type? Is she to be classed as a "pathological liar and swindler"—one of those singular beings made familiar to American readers by Dr. Healy's study,[1] who are characterized by habitual indulgence in "falsification entirely disproportionate to any discernible end in view," yet who "cannot definitely be declared insane, feeble-minded, or epileptic?"

Certainly Narcissa's story offers many details which recall the life-histories of the subjects of Dr. Healy's monograph. Our interest, however, lies rather in a study of the significance of these and other details than in classifying the child, a task which we gladly leave to others.

One interesting point made by Dr. Healy is that, while mental and nervous disorders had occurred in the immediate ancestry of a number of his liars, he "found absolutely no

[1] See footnote, page 144.

proof of the trait of pathological lying, as such, being inherited"; indeed in two instances where he at first thought he had to do with inheritance from a mother who was an habitual liar it later appeared that "there was no blood relationship between the supposed parent and child." These findings should warn us to beware of attaching too much significance to the record of Narcissa's parents, or to weak spots in the ancestry of other problem children with whom we may be called upon to deal.

While we thus emphasize a warning which cannot too often be repeated, we are not, of course, asserting that there may not lie at the root of Narcissa's trouble an instability traceable to her father, who is reported to have been mentally unbalanced even before marriage. On the other hand, imitation of a mother given to the spinning of wild yarns may well account for the first beginnings of fabricating. A small child cannot be expected to distinguish between lies told for sport, as Mrs. Stanhope's are said to have been, and those told in earnest; and whatever a loved mother does is, in these early formative years, likely to be taken as a model. The play element so conspicuous in much of Narcissa's later lying may be accounted for by this early association between fabrication and fun. The loss of her mother, with all the gay companionship she stood for, and transfer to a household of elderly women, inevitably threw the child on her own resources for amusement and may have led to an intensification of early trends. Once well started, habit formation and the ease with which she hoodwinked her aunt undoubtedly helped confirm the girl in her tendency. Her keen wits and gifts as a verbalist suggested ever new uses to which yarning might be turned, until, her instability accentuated by oncoming adolescence, she began to indulge in a veritable orgy of dishonest practices.

Whether this tentative sketch covers the essential factors in Narcissa's case we cannot say. Dr. Healy has shown that lying sometimes begins at the time of a deeply upsetting emotional experience such as often occurs in connection with the discovery of the facts of sex life. It is known that Narcissa, before she was ten, had undergone an experience of this sort, though how the child herself reacted to it we are not told. On the other hand, one apparently truthful witness has asserted that her mother's home had been the scene of adult sex irregularities, and it is possible that Narcissa may have received an early unfortunate initiation there. No direct evidence as to such influences has been forthcoming; so far as we know the child has never given her confidence to anyone.

This central fact brings us to the question of treatment. The obvious importance of a complete change in environment and the need of a controlling discipline in the girl's life sufficiently explain the efforts made to handle the situation through the relatives; and Narcissa's wrath over these approaches, with her earlier inaccessibility to influence from other quarters, account for the visiting teacher's failure to establish a close relationship with the girl. Whether a different method might have succeeded we can never know. The difficulties are only too obvious; yet unless someone does win the confidence of this unstable youngster one questions whether any change in setting can affect the fundamental issue. Incorrigible as the girl seems, we need to remind ourselves that she is today barely fourteen years old, and that there is no way of estimating what effect a total alteration of environmental conditions involving the introduction of a controlling personality might have upon her. With four of the pathological liars whose stories Dr.

Healy tells there had been an "immensely favorable outcome," while others more recently studied were showing steady improvement.

Brothers in Crime

IF there is one person in the community who more than any other has first claim to the visiting teacher's sympathy and help it is surely the mother who is left by death or desertion with a family of boys to rear.

Over-work and constant worry had made Mrs. Helfing nervous and irritable. She had sewed early and late, during the five years since her husband deserted her, to support her four sons. Her oldest, after passing his seventeenth birthday, had left high school and gone to work—to his mother's great concern, for though the need was pressing she had wished him to complete his course. Her second had been helped to an after-school job by the visiting teacher and had held it for several months only to lose it because of persistent smoking. He keenly realized the mistake he had made in letting the habit get such a hold upon him and had since almost given it up. He was doing good work in high school and was trying to find another job. Her third son, Fritz, though only ten, had already caused her serious anxiety. It is around him and his still younger brother that this story centers.

The year before, Fritz had permitted himself to be used as a tool by a crowd of older boys who sent him, with a note purporting to be written by an adult, to purchase tobacco. He had acquired the smoking habit from these same boys. Far more serious, he had been caught by two school-fellows in the act of taking money from a milk bottle; they had forced him to make restitution. His mother had dealt vigorously with these misdemeanors and thought there had been no recur-

rence of them. Fritz was regarded by his teachers as a bright boy, though for a time his school work had been far from satisfactory. Under a plan of weekly reporting to the visiting teacher his marks had notably improved, he had been promoted, and now, at the beginning of the new school year, was doing well in the upper fourth grade and was not felt, either at home or at school, to be a behavior problem.

Under these circumstances, had it not been for the fact that Fritz was still associating with a crowd of boys known to be beyond the control of their parents, the visiting teacher might have ceased to carry him on her mind. As it was, she watched for a chance to gain some form of influence with his present crowd and planned to link him up, as soon as he should be old enough, with a boy scout group or Y. M. C. A. club. She kept in touch with the family through her efforts to find part-time work for the two older boys which should make it possible for the eldest to give up his full-time job and finish his high school course. She also helped the mother to obtain a widow's pension, something to which she had not known she was entitled, and secured clothing for the boys, who were very ragged.

Then one day word came to Miss Lowry that Fritz had stolen a box of candy and had distributed the contents among a group of mates on the school grounds. All three of the other boys were in some sense participants, since they had known they were receiving stolen property. The original responsibility had, however, been Fritz's only, and the parents of his pals, called in by the scandalized principal, had maintained that he alone should be held accountable. The principal had already talked to the boy about his obligation to earn money to repay the store-keeper, but had not communicated with his mother; that task she handed over to the visiting teacher.

In conversation with Miss Lowry Fritz told the story of the theft frankly, showing considerable distress. He had sometimes been with older boys who took things that did not belong to them, he explained, and on this occasion, as he stood by waiting for a friend to make a purchase, he had been seized by the desire to do as these others had done. Taking the candy had given him a feeling of satisfaction. He realized that his act was wrong and that he should make amends. When asked if he had told his mother he broke down and cried; he couldn't do this, he said, it would worry her too much.

Miss Lowry talked with him for some time, pointing out that his mother was his best friend, that it was only fair that she should know at all times what he had done so that she might help him do what was right. He finally agreed to tell her that night.

He failed to keep his word. To the visiting teacher, a few days later, he explained that he had told his two older brothers, and that they had advised against telling their mother because she already had so many worries. Miss Lowry forebore to urge him further on this occasion, feeling that there might be some special reason why her sons were shielding Mrs. Helfing. She devoted herself instead to winning the boy's confidence, and partially succeeded. He told her of his earlier theft from a milk bottle (the only one, he maintained, that he had ever been guilty of) but could not be led to talk freely of the associates who had influenced him to steal.

Later on this same day the principal again urged that the visiting teacher call on Mrs. Helfing and tell her the whole story. Miss Lowry succeeded, however, in convincing the principal that it would be better to carry out the original plan of persuading the boy to tell his mother, since it was important that he should be led to make a confidant of her.

When a third interview with the culprit revealed an unchanged situation, Miss Lowry got in touch with one of the older brothers and obtained his promise to try to induce Fritz to confess. When a fourth interview proved this effort also to have been unavailing, she went home with Fritz and explained to Mrs. Helfing that he had something he must tell her. The story was thus finally brought out. Mrs. Helfing, much distressed, told the boy that she would give him a sound thrashing. Though the visiting teacher in a private talk tried to influence her to give up this plan, since its execution might destroy in the boy the confidence in his mother which she had tried to create, she was unsuccessful. Mrs. Helfing felt that she must administer the whipping as promised. Thus it became the duty of the visiting teacher to try to make Fritz understand that his mother punished him now to save him from worse punishment later in life.

In this interview with mother and son a plan of payment for the candy was worked out. Miss Lowry emphasized that Mrs. Helfing should not assume the obligation, that this was Fritz's own responsibility, and agreed to advance the money which he should repay by installments as he earned small sums.

Mrs. Helfing talked at length, on this occasion, of her struggles to keep Fritz at home evenings. He had taken to slipping out on some pretext or other and would often stay until nine o'clock; and he was not as reliable and helpful as he should be when given tasks to do at home. To meet these difficulties it was arranged that every Monday the mother should send a note to Miss Lowry by Fritz reporting on his behavior for the preceding week.

This system of checking proved as effective as the much commoner plan of having a child's room teacher send daily or weekly reports by him to visiting teacher or mother. Following upon the home interview the visiting teacher made a

point of having a talk with the boy. She dwelt upon the mother's responsibilities and the effort she was making for all her children and asked if there were any things he could do to help. He himself suggested little tasks about the house. At the beginning of the next week Fritz came with a beaming face to bring his first report from home, which was favorable in every respect. He also brought fifteen cents which he had earned, as a first payment on his debt.

Later reports were no less satisfactory; Mrs. Helfing usually commented favorably upon the boy's performance of his chosen tasks. Soon it began to seem as though better habits were really being established by the aid of this simple device for concentrating Fritz's attention on his own behavior and giving him the incentive of assured appreciation for well-doing.

It proved, however, to be far from easy for a boy still under eleven to find opportunities to earn money. Faced with the danger of default from a well-intentioned young debtor, Miss Lowry consulted again with the grocer-creditor, and found him quite ready to meet the situation in a helpful spirit. He offered Fritz a job; every morning the boy was to sweep the sidewalk in front of the store and to receive in exchange a credit of five cents on his account. It was a proud day for the youngster when, the stolen box of candy paid for in full, he was engaged to continue the same service for a cash payment of five cents a day—an arrangement which naturally completed his rehabilitation by proving him to have gained the confidence of the man from whom he stole.

This new source of income was also a practical help in carrying out plans for Fritz's future welfare. The visiting teacher had already arranged for his admittance to a club for boys at the Y. M. C. A., and he was enthusiastic over the prospect of swimming and basket-ball twice a week. He could now pay his car-fare to and fro. It was hoped that the

new interest would prove a substitute for less wholesome associations. With the coming of summer Miss Lowry also arranged for him to have a fortnight in camp.

The story of Fritz's theft may be supplemented by an account of what soon after befell his little brother Don—a different story which illustrates quite another point.

Don was a bright boy of seven, in the second grade. No misconduct had ever been laid at his door; his teacher said he was "good."

One day about a month after Fritz's misdeed Don broke the five-cent saw with which he was working in a certain class-project. As he said he had no money to buy another his teacher lent him five cents so that he might not be delayed in his work.

Days passed, and Don came to school again and again without the new saw. His teacher questioned him. He said simply that he had forgotten. She asked him to bring the nickel back. He did not do so, claimed not to have been able to find it. She began to suspect that he had appropriated it to other uses, and as he continued to "forget" took up the matter with the principal.

The principal at once traced a likeness between the brothers. She questioned Don. He declared that the nickel was at home in a pocket-book and that he would bring it in the morning. She said, "Now Don, look at me and tell me what you did with that nickel. Are you sure you have it at home? Are you sure you did not spend it for candy?" Though he stuck to his story she was sure he was lying, and meeting the visiting teacher later in the day told of this new crime in the Helfing family. Both boys were "very dishonest," she felt.

Next morning the visiting teacher inquired early and learned that Don had again failed to produce the five cents

and that the principal had accused him directly of lying and of having spent the money.

Miss Lowry went at once to the Helfing home. She merely asked whether the mother knew anything about a nickel that Don had brought home from the teacher. Mrs. Helfing replied promptly, "Oh, yes, I have the nickel right here but it takes twelve cents to go to town to get the saws and I have not had other reason to go so have neglected it. I have meant to send the money back to school but it seems that every day Don gets away without my remembering it."

* * *

Thus was the suspicion of dishonesty lifted from the shoulders of seven-year-old Don. It was perhaps not strange that such a suspicion should have entered the mind of his teacher; the unwisdom of letting the child know that it was entertained is too obvious to need comment. Launching accusations based on flimsy evidence is as objectionable in the case of a child as in that of an adult—more so, indeed, since the child's ability to defend himself is pathetically limited. In such situations one cannot be too careful to make sure of one's facts.

Real stealing, of however slight dimensions, should of course never be overlooked. Small children must be taught the principle of mine and thine—no one is born with an understanding of property rights. Some learn the lesson quickly, some slowly; there are many highly honorable adults who vividly recall the painful episodes which taught it to them. Such being the case, there is no need of losing one's head over these affairs. It is a safe guess that as much harm may be done by exaggerating their importance, overpunishing for them, and making the child feel that their

recurrence is looked for, as would follow complete disregard. Children, even more than adults, tend to play up to what they feel is expected of them.

Crooking As a Sport

"HIS Face his Fortune" might well be the title of this story. For if Peter Sukovich ever arrives at fame and fortune, or—to speak more soberly—if ever he is steered through the difficulties of adolescence to stable adulthood, it will be because of the charm exerted upon the grown-up world by his singularly winsome little countenance, and strengthened by his equally exceptional flow of enlivening conversation.

Peter at six-and-a-half was enthralled with the romance of thievery. And why not? Had not his big brother Paul, aged nine, already been "sent up for crooking" after five arrests, and hadn't he returned to the family bosom bursting with tales of wild adventure and hair-breadth escape, gleaned from his comrades in the correctional school?

Peter had but recently graduated from the Farnham day nursery into the first grade of Whittier School; indeed he could hardly be said to have graduated, for he returned to the nursery every afternoon at the close of school. His mother, who worked in a factory all day, had made this arrangement for him. Doubtless her hope had been to protect her small son from the dangers of the street. She did indeed receive him, along with his baby sister, safe and sound of limb, each evening. But what protection could nursery or school afford a little boy who went home every night to a bold bad big brother?

The Sukovich home at this time consisted of two rooms

on the top floor of a ramshackle tenement. They were light and might have been airy enough, but were dirty and disorderly beyond description. Mrs. Sukovich spoke next to no English; her husband spoke fairly well—he had been in the United States twenty years—but he was seldom to be found. He was said to have twice deserted his family, and when not at home, out of work, was off on a job somewhere. He was a skilled workman and earned high wages, but no visitor to the home would ever have suspected the fact. He accused his wife of having no control of the children, a charge which seemed well founded. The Sukovichs were already known to the Family Welfare Society, the Red Cross Home Service Section, and the Children's Court; the home had been "saved," once, by a newspaper fund. The rooms were usually crowded with rough "boarders."

Peter's teacher in the first grade was much concerned about him. He was wildly restless and distractable, with an unending flow of conversation most upsetting to classroom discipline. What was worse, he stole at every chance. He would go out of the building with his class, then return and pick up any little thing he saw lying about. Apparently it was not the desire to possess these objects so much as the lure of the game that led him on. All the time he "looked like a smiling baby."

The visiting teacher to whom Peter was referred found him an exceptionally attractive child, responsive, affectionate, and to all appearances as readily influenced for good as for evil. Psychological tests indicated that he was of normal intelligence. His excessive activity and almost manic flow of conversation seemed clearly to indicate his need of careful individual handling, and he was removed at once from the regular grade and placed in an experimental class for nervous children which had recently been formed. Here he would receive

much individual attention from a teacher selected because of her skill and ingenuity in handling difficult children, would share in such fascinating project work as toy-making, and would take part in varied physical activities in gymnasium and swimming pool. His class offered indeed all the advantages of a club; it aimed to develop the whole child. All the children in it were carefully examined physically and studied by a psychiatrist.

As the youngest in this group of youthful problems Peter naturally attracted much attention. His diminutive size and bewitching baby ways endeared him first of all to his teacher, then one by one to the other adults in the building. As he became more at home he was forever slipping into the psychologist's room, the visiting teacher's room, or the principal's office with some thrilling tale of adventure—an escapade of his brother's, news of the arrival of a baby at home, or what not.

In the new classroom the freer curriculum gave more legitimate opportunities for activity and so diminished the child's restlessness. His teacher's affection for him and his for her also helped in his general adjustment. But for some time his thieving continued unabated. Word came too from a nearby settlement that he had taken to sneaking in there and going through the children's coat pockets while they were at work or play. Miss Olliver, his teacher, was almost at her wits' ends when she hit upon a scheme which proved a solution for this problem, so far at least as the classroom was concerned.

It was Peter's predilection for pencils, erasers, and other school supplies which suggested the solution. He had a passion for opening Miss Olliver's desk drawers whenever she was out of the room and helping himself, as well as for picking up similar articles from the other children's desks.

A supply closet opened from the school room. Miss Olliver invested Peter with the office of supply clerk, turning over to him a large and impressive-looking key. Thus the fascinating task of counting pads, pencils, and the like became his, together with the weighty responsibility of doling out these articles to the other children. Peter speedily developed into a zealous guardian of the treasure house, and classroom depredations ceased as if by magic.

This happy state of affairs continued for nearly a year. During most of this time Paul, the big brother, was in the correctional school to which he had been returned for a second term. Part of the winter was also spent by Mr. Sukovich in the workhouse whither he was sent for contempt of court after refusing to pay Paul's board. It was after his father's return home and shortly before Paul's expected arrival that Peter was caught stealing again. His teacher suspected that his thoughts, distracted for a time from his favorite sport of crooking by other interests, had reverted to this fascinating pastime as his brother's home-coming became imminent. Since she had become acquainted with Peter the visiting teacher had learned much about his family both from personal observation and from consultation with other agencies. All the social organizations that had been in contact with them regarded the Sukovichs as "hopeless." The influences of the home, especially with the return of the older boy, were such that there seemed little chance that Peter would do well while he remained there. Accordingly it was decided to make an attempt to place him in a boarding school.

The efforts of the visiting teacher to find a suitable school were, however, unavailing. She could learn of none that charged less than $30 a month, apart from incidentals. Obviously a father who had gone to jail rather than pay for his

other boy, and who had been for months without a job, could not be looked to for such an amount, nor was any other source of supply available.

By the time this conclusion had been regretfully reached, Paul Sukovich, after only a few weeks at home, had been returned to the correctional school on a charge of breaking into a house and stealing. Spring was by now well advanced, and the visiting teacher decided to transfer her energies to the task of arranging for a summer in the country for her young charge. Before the close of school she had succeeded in interesting an agency which undertook to plan such an outing.

Nothing, however, came of this plan. When Miss Winthrop returned in the fall she found that the only member of the family who had enjoyed a change of scene was Mr. Sukovich. He had again spent a season in the workhouse for refusal to pay Paul's board, and was still there. The Family Welfare Society had been aiding Mrs. Sukovich in his absence, and through their agent the visiting teacher arranged to have the mother and children sent away for a fortnight. Before this plan could be carried out, however, the head of the house returned and refused his consent. He "wanted home cooking."

Perhaps Mr. Sukovich had by now concluded that steady work paid, perhaps he had merely been unlucky before and was now lucky in finding such work. At any rate, the record of the school year that now opened differs from that of the preceding year in the important respect that he was constantly and profitably employed. Home conditions, however, showed no marked improvement. A report that the man gambled may explain much.

The year passed without serious misdemeanor on Peter's part. He did however suffer from various physical ailments—

swollen glands, and toothache. Physical examination led to the discovery that he badly needed a tonsil and adenoid operation. His baby sister also was ill, and the mother's custom of feeding her at all hours and dosing her indiscriminately did not help matters.

In these minor family crises Miss Winthrop was called upon to play a part. She had been dropping in occasionally to see Mrs. Sukovich, now, for a long time. She had always been chary of giving advice, her experience having led her to the belief that those who deal most liberally in this commodity have least success in changing the attitudes of their clients. Moreover, she had always felt Mrs. Sukovich's deficiencies as a housekeeper to be beyond the reach of training. She had sympathized in all sorts of misfortunes and predicaments and by her quiet, unassuming, uncritical friendliness had gradually established herself in the mother's mind as a person to be turned to when in perplexity. So now Mrs. Sukovich accepted her guidance in arranging for a physical examination and an operation for Peter, and cheerfully paid the required hospital fee. She followed Miss Winthrop's suggestion, too, in seeking a baby health center. By this time the visiting teacher had come to the conclusion, based on fuller knowledge, that with all her inadequacies the mother was thoroughly kind and devoted to her children. Her husband she said was very cruel to her. She showed much gratitude for every service rendered.

Once more as spring drew near Paul was returned to the bosom of his family. On his various brief sojourns in the home circle he had always attended a different school from Peter's. This year, however, the visiting teacher contrived to get him into a late afternoon group in shop work at Peter's school, hoping in this way to keep him out of temptation for a few at least of his free hours and possibly gain an influence

with him. Whether he actually refrained from his usual depredations for a time, or merely escaped detection, is not clear. Neither he nor Peter seems to have got into any serious trouble while he was at home, but after an exceptionally long stay of three months his parole was ended by his mother's returning him to the custody of the institution. Her reasons for this action were never precisely known, but may be readily surmised.

Before this event, which took place just at the end of the school year, arrangements had been completed for an entire summer at a boy's camp for Peter. A visitor to the school who was interested in children's problems made this plan possible. This understanding woman had been charmed, as everybody who saw him was charmed, by our young hero, and on being appealed to for funds to cover the summer's expenses gladly sent a cheque. It was at this point that it began to be apparent that Peter's face was to be his fortune.

The best of reports from camp followed Peter to school next fall. He had been happy there, his conduct had been satisfactory, and he had evidently benefitted physically by the experience.

For the first three months of school it seemed as though the better record of the last year was to be repeated. There was, to be sure, a report that Peter was smoking regularly. When asked about this the boy frankly acknowledged the practice. His parents knew about it and didn't seem to care, he said, and when he smoked on his block "nobody hollered at him." He was entirely agreeable to Miss Winthrop's suggestion that he give up the habit; but then, as she remarked in telling of the conversation, "with Peter one never knows how deep the resolution may be." In the effort to strengthen this resolve a special reward was offered: if Peter would give up smoking and try to do his best, he should have an enlarge-

ment of a snap-shot of himself, taken the summer before, to give his mother for Christmas.

These enlargements served another purpose. One of them was sent, by way of "thank you," to the woman who had paid for the boy's summer in the country. It brought an enthusiastic letter from her, in which she expressed her appreciation of what was being done for Peter and her readiness to help again, if money should be needed to aid in working out the boy's problem.

The fall witnessed a small outbreak of truancy on Peter's part. Changes in the school had necessitated placing him in a new class. Missing Miss Olliver and feeling less liking for his new teacher he became restless and begged for a transfer. As he had no valid ground for the request, it was denied him. He stayed away a day or two, but as soon as he learned that the visiting teacher had called to inquire for him, returned to school.

Smoking and playing hookey were, however, in this instance, minor issues, which sank into insignificance before what followed.

It was in December, shortly before the holidays, that Peter plunged his friends once more into acute anxiety about him. A new baby had recently arrived at his home and doubtless his mother's helplessness had given him his opportunity. He appeared at the school with two or three dollars which he spent on treats for his friends. When questioned about the source of his wealth, he said his mother had given it to him. This proved to be untrue, but she had missed three dollars from her purse a day or two before. The inference was only too clear.

Early in January Peter's teacher missed a ten-dollar bill, and as Peter, on the days that followed, seemed in possession of rather more change than usual, suspicion again naturally

attached itself to him. This time nothing approaching proof was forthcoming, but the incident intensified the fears reawakened in December, and drove the visiting teacher, in consultation with the psychologist, to revive a plan abandoned under difficulties nearly two years before.

Everything was now clear sailing. Letters to a number of boarding schools of Peter's faith brought replies which reduced the choice to one. Mr. and Mrs. Sukovich were consulted and readily gave their consent to letting Peter go; the long series of minor services rendered had developed in them a confidence which made them willing to accept the visiting teacher's advice on this major issue. A letter to the friend who had paid for Peter's summer at camp brought a cordial response accompanied by a check sufficient to cover the balance of the year. Sending a little boy of nine a day's journey away to an unknown school was recognized as a somewhat hazardous procedure; but the dangers of the present situation, with Paul Sukovich at twelve serving a third term in the correctional school as an example of what might happen to his brother, seemed to justify the experiment.

Now began the exciting business of supplying Peter's outfit. His parents, furnished with the long list of clothing required, surprised Miss Winthrop by supplying all of it, and a new suitcase as well; this prompt and practical cooperation on the part of people who lived in the hap-hazard, hand-to-mouth fashion of these two seemed clear evidence of the visiting teacher's influence with them. Mr. Sukovich also paid for his son's ticket; and Peter was sent off, armed with two post-cards upon which he was to announce his safe arrival to his mother and to the visiting teacher.

The card which reached Miss Winthrop two days later bore not only the announcement of Peter's safe arrival but

a little note added by the Sister in charge of the school: "Yes, Peter is right at home. He is a bright little fellow." One opines that again Peter's face was proving his fortune, carrying him straight to the hearts of the adults who ruled his world.

Miss Winthrop in writing the brief history of Peter which she supplied had refrained from going into any details which might lead the school authorities to take a suspicious attitude toward him and thus hamper him in making a fresh start. She had sketched the home background, mentioned the fact of Paul's being in a correctional school, and added: "When he is home he is undoubtedly a bad influence on the boy." She had then turned to the things that made her hopeful for Peter's future: his responsiveness to his environment, and in particular his good record at camp.

The first letter from the Sister in charge of the school implied that she had already made discoveries regarding her new pupil. "He is a dear little fellow," she wrote of Peter, "and I hope we got him in time to change his little trend. It is very easy to reason with him, and . . . he is very confiding when he knows one is taking an interest in him."

Just what lay behind this cautious phraseology did not appear until two months later, when another letter from the Sister was more specific about Peter's "little trend."

"Peter is real well and we all like him," she wrote, "but he must have learned some of his brother's games. He was here but a few days when he took new pencils from a boy's pencil box and was selling them. We corrected and advised him and of course he would never do it again. Last week he took two dollars and a half from a locked box in which one boy keeps his money. He gave some of it to another boy and then had a day pupil buy some balls. . . ."

How it had been discovered that Peter was the thief is not stated. He refused for some time to admit that he had taken the sum in question, though the elaborate and easily disproved falsehood he told, of snatching money from a boy in the village, would have involved him in equal guilt. Finally, after being "reasoned with" by the Sister in charge, and "told how wrong it was, and so on," he admitted that he had taken the money from the box.

The letter went on to explain that very little temptation to steal was offered at the school, since only the one older boy who figured in this affair was allowed to keep his own spending money. Now that "Peter's disposition" was understood the Sisters would do what they could "to lead him on the right path." "He may outgrow it when he learns where such things will lead him to. We shall certainly impress it on his mind and do what we can for him. When I told him where he was likely to go—as he had told me where Paul is and that he was sent there for stealing—he cried and said that he would never do it again. I will take him by himself from time to time and advise him. He is a cute little fellow and with God's help he will overcome the temptation."

The visiting teacher, writing to enclose the last monthly check of the school year, had this to say:

"Peter's family have been to see me and are going to pay for his summer at the Young Pioneer's Camp. As I am near there during the summer, I shall no doubt have a chance to keep a watchful eye on him. Mrs. Wetherby, who has been financing him this winter, stands ready to pay for him next year. We all feel that you have handled Peter with understanding and sympathy and hope that you will feel able to have him return to you next fall."

In the latter part of June Peter came home, and a few days later left for his summer of ten weeks at camp.

The visiting teacher was just settling down for her own summer in another camp a few miles distant when a telephone message from the director of the Young Pioneers informed her that Peter had insisted on going home with the group that left at the end of the first fortnight. Another boy who had been excessively homesick had apparently stirred up in Peter a similar feeling, so that all efforts to dissuade him had been in vain. The director would receive him back provided he came willingly.

Through a worker left in charge at the school office Miss Winthrop was able to reach Peter. The youngster, having had his visit at home, was quite ready to return, and the rest of his summer at camp was happy and—from the standpoint of his elders—uneventful. When later in the season Miss Winthrop paid a visit to the Young Pioneers she was impressed by Peter's "mature and solemn air." "He walked with me to the camp limits," she writes, "and conversed in a very settled manner."

On the day school opened Peter appeared among his old friends, and spent the day visiting his former class. He was going back to boarding school and was making his own arrangements. The only difficulty he had encountered was that he didn't know where to find indelible ink. Miss Winthrop supplied this necessity, and marked a set of tapes for him. His relatively calm and steady demeanor throughout the day impressed all observers.

Another incident of this same day added to the satisfaction felt by his friends in Peter. A small boy had come to school very poorly shod. Peter took pity on him, and at noon conducted him to his own home and outfitted him with shoes and a tie.

A recent report from the head Sister at the boarding school states that Peter is partly in the third and partly in the

fourth grade, is doing well in spelling and arithmetic, and not so well in English, reading, and writing. There is no mention of any behavior difficulty.

* * *

The experimental nature of the treatment applied to Peter Sukovich is evident. Workers with children know how difficult it is, in most communities, to find schools or institutions ideally fitted to the needs of problem children. Between the private boarding school and the correctional school there is no middle way. The desire to save so young a child as Peter from commitment and further contamination by older and worse boys is readily understood, and seems fully to justify the running of some risks in placing him in a strange school.

Let no one imagine that Peter's friends regard him, at ten years, as saved from a life of crime. Workers with their broad experience and reading in human psychology leap to no such flattering conclusions. They know well the innumerable pitfalls which adolescence spreads before the feet of the growing boy in the type of neighborhood where Peter's family live; they realize fully the influence likely to be exerted by the elder brother; they are too well acquainted with Peter's volatile, suggestible nature to be convinced that the recent striking change in him will prove permanent. Hope that present good influences, if long enough exerted, may really counteract his unfortunate early trend and establish a new system of habit-reactions is however strong. Out of the multitude of small boys needing just such opportunities, this one, gifted by nature with rare charm, is being given his chance. Modern educators are beginning to realize the importance of conserving and developing the abilities of exceptionally brilliant children. May it not be equally desirable to

safeguard and develop youngsters endowed with exceptional personalities, who from babyhood manifest a special aptitude for capturing affection and giving delight? Such power to win hearts would seem a gift too precious to let slip.

A First Offender

ALTHOUGH it was the school principal who asked Miss Montgomery to interest herself in John Buell, it was not because the boy had been in trouble at school: his record there was good, and all his teachers, past and present, spoke well of him. He was however in very serious trouble, for he had been arrested for stealing a large sum from the market man for whom he worked after school hours. The judge had held a preliminary hearing and had wished the visiting teacher to make a study of the boy.

Miss Montgomery found John an attractive lad of fourteen—fair-haired and blue-eyed, very neat in appearance, with a pleasant smile, though in this first interview he was sober, anxious, and ashamed. At the outset he did not realize that he had been sent to the visiting teacher because of his dishonesty, and when she invited his attention to a variety of mental tests it was with the aim—usually avowed in the case of adolescents—of discovering his special aptitudes and the type of work he was best fitted for.

The tests furnished evidence that the boy had a mental age about two years below his actual age, so that he was to be ranked as a dull-normal. He was very responsive and showed a lively interest, especially in the supplementary tests which gave him a chance to display his powers of visualizing, of perceiving space relations, of eye-hand coordination, and the like. None of these tests, however,

revealed any special abilities which might compensate for what he lacked in general intelligence. His position in the sixth grade, two years behind the average child of his age, appeared to be the logical one for a boy of his mental equipment.

Miss Montgomery kept till the last a test in ethical discrimination, and when John had successfully passed it, answering all the questions correctly, she quietly asked him why, when he seemed to know the difference between right and wrong, he had done as he had. He was much surprised, but seemed relieved to talk about his trouble. It appeared that he had for several months past been taking small sums from the amounts confided to him by his employer to be deposited in the bank. It had been so easy—the boss never required him to show a deposit slip or checked up on him in any way. John was crazy about outdoor life, on the water especially, and it was his desire to go off over the fourth of July to the seaside that had first led him into trouble; he had paid his own expenses and those of a boy friend at a nearby resort. Most of the money he had taken since had gone for the hire of a catboat in which he and two or three pals had spent many a jolly Saturday. More than one hundred dollars had been abstracted in this manner before his employer, getting down to work at last on his accounts, discovered what had been going on.

John admitted that he deserved to be sent to the reformatory but wished that he might be given another chance. He promised to "make good."

The Buell home was a neat, comfortable little flat over a candy shop. Mrs. Buell was well known to many of the townsfolk for whom she had worked as seamstress, and bore an excellent reputation, as did also her two daughters. John's father had however served a term in prison for non-

support when John was a baby, and his older brother was serving one now, for theft. The father had disappeared after completion of his term, but there was evidently ground enough for apprehension regarding the boy's future, if only because of the force of example in his own family. Present home influences were apparently good. John's mother had married again, a very decent sort of man, whose attitude toward the boy appeared to be all that could be desired. Mrs. Buell talked freely, expressing much concern and an earnest desire to help in any way possible in straightening out her son. His misconduct had come as a great shock to her, for he had never before given her any cause for serious anxiety, and like his teachers and his employer she had fully trusted him. She was not a church member, and John had never received any definite religious training.

These various items were reported to the judge by Miss Montgomery, together with her own interpretation: that this boy, avid for outdoor life, with few opportunities for healthful recreation, had been tempted beyond his strength owing to the lax business methods of his employer; that he was sincerely sorry, and she hoped might be given another chance.

Then came the trial—an informal affair in the judge's private office, at which the probation officer, the school principal, the parents, and the visiting teacher were present and testified. The judge was kindly in his treatment of the boy. John was placed on probation, with orders to meet five conditions. He was to report monthly to the probation officer and weekly to the visiting teacher; he was to join some Sunday school, and some organization such as the Boy Scouts; and he was to assist his step-father in repaying the money he had taken.

From the first John did well. He expressed a desire to go

to church where the judge went, so that he might see him every Sunday—he was "such a nice man and so kind." The visiting teacher accordingly introduced the boy both to this church and to the Sunday school, and later he connected himself with the Scout troop there as well. His school record continued to be blameless; he cut loose from his former companions, and showed a fine spirit in all his school relations. He worked well and faithfully at a number of short-time jobs obtained for him by Miss Montgomery, proving himself trustworthy in situations that furnished him with opportunities for dishonesty and expressing his appreciation of the confidence shown in him. Six months after the discovery of his theft he had so far demonstrated his reliability that he was no longer required to report in person to the probation officer. Instead he was put upon his honor to report in writing truthfully and at the appointed time; the fact that the accuracy of his reports was checked up not being known to him. He was by this time settled in an outdoor job that promised, after the close of school, to take care of most of his time and energies, and the visiting teacher looked forward without anxiety to what she believed would prove a wholesome, happy summer for her charge.

* * *

We have here a series of deliberate thefts extending over a period of several months; and looming in the background, full of sinister suggestion, a family history which might well give cause for alarm. Yet both John's earlier and his later record furnish substantial ground for the belief that he is essentially an honest straightforward boy. Like the poor clerk who forged, in Galsworthy's "Justice," he was tempted beyond his strength through his employer's fault. Had he been sent to a correctional institution to mingle with older

and worse boys, and come out branded, he would have been in danger of becoming an habitual criminal. Instead, he seems well on the way to honorable and stable adulthood.

The visiting teacher's work in this case combines the service of a psychologist, for which she was fully trained, with that of a probation officer. In a small city, where trained workers in specialized fields are lacking, one may, indeed, be called upon for almost any type of service, and no form of training will be likely to come amiss. The great danger in such situations is of course that the distinctive work of the visiting teacher—preventive work in the early stages of personality difficulties, with all that it involves of home and school visiting—will be crowded out by other activities.

"Two-Thirds Good"

NO one who hadn't followed Miss Kent's struggles with Seth Lambert during the more than a year that she had known him could appreciate what it meant to her when his new teacher announced her judgment of him in the words of our title.

Seth had come to the visiting teacher early in the preceding fall, at the age of eleven, with one of the worst records for general misconduct, including truancy, in his school. The year that followed had been characterized by ups and downs —periods of marked improvement followed by disheartening lapses. Although some of his teachers had been ready to admit that the boy was likable despite his faults, he had proved too much for all of them. This second fall a threat of suspension had brought things to a climax, and as a last resort Miss Kent had arranged for Seth's transfer to another school—a special school for "incorrigibles," boys whom

no one in the system would tolerate. From the new school, a month later, had come this word, with all that it implied of hope.

The struggles of that first year are worth following in some detail.

Seth had been sullen when first he was sent to the visiting teacher; yet even in an ugly mood there was something appealing about him. He answered all Miss Kent's questions in a perfunctory monotone. Finally, "I'm tired of having so many people boss me," he declared. "I don't do nufin no how, but jes lemme wiggle and it's always the same thing—'You go straight to the office and sit there until I send for you.'" His voice was raised in a fairly recognizable imitation of his teacher's.

Miss Kent assured the boy that she had no intention of bossing him. Furthermore—this in response to a question from him—she wouldn't even visit his home unless he wanted her to. Seth voiced no objection—a fact that seems to show that he was already won by this friend of bad boys. Next day she called on his mother.

Mrs. Lambert received Miss Kent pleasantly—Seth had told of the coming visit—and invited her in. The home consisted of a poor little two-room apartment. The mother was an uneducated woman but showed fair intelligence and a real desire that her son should have schooling. She commented on the kindness of the teachers to Seth, despite the fact that he was always in trouble. The boy was very affectionate, she said, gave no trouble at home, was always ready to go on errands or to help about the house. He did just about as he pleased, though, she acknowledged—running the streets till all hours, going to movies four or five times a week, and so forth. His father frequently whipped him very severely, again would let a similar offense pass without punishment;

she whipped him too. Nothing seemed to be accomplished by these beatings, she admitted, except to rouse a spirit of rebellion in the boy. She promised to discontinue them and to persuade her husband to do likewise.

It was the husband and father who was the great problem of the home. He drank spasmodically, his wife said, often staying away on a spree for days together. When sober he was kind and indulgent, but never provided properly for his family; often they had barely enough to eat. Without the earnings of an older son the home could hardly have been held together. Mr. Lambert was away on a job now, but as soon as he returned his wife wanted the visiting teacher to talk to him.

A week later Miss Kent learned on arriving at the school that the man had called to see her. He had talked to the principal and teachers, maintaining that Seth wasn't so bad but they all "picked on him." He expressed satisfaction that somebody who was not a teacher was going to try to do something for the boy, and left a message asking that Miss Kent please call as soon as possible.

She did call next day, and found Mr. Lambert in the best of spirits. He related his own history with gusto—told how good-for-nothing he was, how he drank and forged checks, stayed away from home, got into court, and so forth; and how sorry he was when he sobered up. He asked, "How can I expect anything of the boy when I am his father?"

The visiting teacher suggested that perhaps she'd better begin with him. He agreed, saying that if there was anything that would cure him of drink he'd take it. A long talk ensued in which Miss Kent said many things that made the man think. Once he tried to lay the blame on his wife. She spoke up and asked whether he had any real complaint about her. He thought a moment, then said "No, she's a

good wife—has always done more than her part, and I've always given trouble. If she wasn't all right I wouldn't live with her." The visiting teacher asked "What if your wife should say that about you?" He had not thought of it that way. . . .

The conversation was brought back to Seth. The father acknowledged that the boy was following in his footsteps. He asked, "What can I do?" Miss Kent suggested that he could stay sober and support his family at least; that he could take a little interest in his son, go with him on jaunts to the beach or the country Sundays. He exclaimed, "By George, I'll do that just to see." He promised to keep sober over the week-end and take the youngster somewhere.

The following Monday Seth reported having had a nice time on Saturday and Sunday with his father and mother. They had gone to visit his aunt in the country. He added, "Mama says she thinks papa is going to do better." "And you?" queried the visiting teacher. "Me too," he said, and smiled.

It would be delightful to record that this fine beginning was followed by complete reform on the part of father and son. Unfortunately, it was only the first of the "ups" referred to, which during most of that first year were regularly followed by "downs." So far as the father is concerned, it seems, indeed, to have been the only "up." As Miss Kent soon learned, the man had been given every possible chance for reform by the rector of his parish, a fine man, who had labored with him devotedly for many years past.

Yet if Mr. Lambert was practically all the time "down," he was also, part of the time, "out"—not in the sense of the Salvation Army poster, but literally out of the family circle—in jail. And as time went on a very interesting relation was

traced by the visiting teacher between these periods of incarceration and his son's behavior record.

During the fall and early winter Seth was almost continually in hot water. He skipped school frequently—to go to a fair, to visit the movies, to go fishing. A favorite dodge of his was to get himself excused on account of sickness. When a number of calls, following such excuses, had revealed that the boy had not gone home, and when the school nurse had given it as her opinion that nothing was wrong with him, the visiting teacher determined upon drastic measures. The next time Seth presented his favorite excuse she expressed much concern over his illness, insisted—to his obvious confusion—upon accompanying him home, and enlisted his mother's cooperation in putting him to bed, in administering a liberal dose of castor oil, and treating him generally like a sick boy. The result was a much chastened youngster who for several weeks made a distinctly better attendance record. Indeed, from this time on the truancy issue gradually diminished in importance till it came to play a minor part in the total problem.

During the fall term, also, another and more serious danger threatened. Several times Seth was suspected—at school, at Sunday school, or elsewhere—of having taken things that didn't belong to him; and twice he was "caught with the goods"—in one instance the cap of a school-mate, in the other some oranges from a fruit store. If the dealer who reported the second episode to the school had chosen to press his charge, a court appearance must have followed; but the man showed himself kindly disposed, even though this had not been Seth's first offense against him, and the boy, after a long and serious session with the principal and Miss Kent, was left in a state of informal probation to the visiting teacher. It was felt that a real impression had been made

upon him, that he had at last grasped the conception of property rights put before him. This assumption appears justified by more than a year's subsequent record in which dishonesty plays no part.

While Seth was still in the lamb-like mood following upon the castor-oil episode Miss Kent had made an appointment for him at a children's clinic. Here he was given a psychological examination which proved him to be equipped with average intelligence, and a physical examination which led to tonsillectomy and the prescription of a tonic. His mother administered the medicine regularly, and the boy gradually gained in weight and color.

Despite the accomplishments which, in retrospect, are assignable to this first period of fall and early winter, the visiting teacher in December recorded her feeling that no "definite or permanent improvement" had taken place in Seth. There were "times when he was not so troublesome as formerly"—that was all that could be claimed. Four times during the holidays she encountered him on the street, in company with an even worse boy, and looking like "a regular little tramp." She invited the two youngsters to go to a movie with her, but they displayed a complete and baffling indifference. The day after his return to school Seth was reported to the office twice—once for cursing two little girls, again for damaging a fence on property adjoining the school. He denied both charges, but the weight of evidence was against him. Thus the new year opened with anything but an encouraging outlook.

About mid-January, however, a significant change took place; a change which Miss Kent attributes largely to the quieting effect upon the boy of his father's imprisonment just then, with the more regular and peaceful home life which this event rendered possible.

The first sign of this change appeared one day when, meeting Seth in the hall, the visiting teacher inquired whether he was disappointed at not being promoted. He replied, "Why, Miss Kent, you know I am not disappointed. How could I be promoted? But I'll tell you one thing—I've made up my mind to be a good boy and get on the roll of honor." Seth's frank self-criticism was one of his disarming and endearing traits; and though this was not his first announcement of good resolutions, his friend the visiting teacher was the last person to discourage him by reminders that no previous epoch of reform had lasted more than a few days.

The present one, though the ultimate glory of the roll of honor was not attained, did persist in more or less recognizable form for several months. There were indeed a few outbreaks of impudence and of truancy during this period, but these were sporadic and of brief duration. His teacher showed herself able to manage him, and there was general recognition throughout the building that he had improved greatly. One of a group of teachers remarked one day, when he passed, "There goes a changed boy since the visiting teacher came here." Another of the group thereupon caught up with the youngster and led him to the visiting teacher's room, where she related the incident and expressed her own pleasure in his evident better health and spirits, as shown by his rosy cheeks and happy smile. Naturally such appreciation tended still further to confirm the better state of affairs.

A number of services for Seth and his family had been performed by the visiting teacher during these months. When the mother was plunged into despair by the father's imprisonment, Miss Kent had called in the Associated Charities whose visitor proved most helpful and cooperative. She

had given Mrs. Lambert her own laundry work to do, and used the opportunities presented by Seth's weekly visits to her home to strengthen her friendly hold on the boy. One such visit is thus recorded:

"Seth came to my house to bring my laundry. Was clean and looked mighty nice. I invited him into the living room. He was perfectly charmed, couldn't talk for looking around. Told me that he was getting on fine, said he always does better when he is clean and can wear good clothes. I knew this was true. Told him to take care of his shoes [these had been given him by a friendly neighbor], to keep his clothes brushed up. . . . He talked about his father. Said he had been down to the jail to see him but his father didn't seem very glad to have him. Told me that somehow he hasn't the right feeling for his father. Walked home with him and we had a nice little visit at home. He told me he was going to be at Sunday school on Sunday and that he was going to behave too."

Another incident or series of incidents which cast light upon relations between visiting teacher and boy followed upon her giving him two new blouses for Easter. "He was so happy to have them that he threw his arms around his mother's neck and hugged and kissed her, saying he did not remember when he had ever had a new blouse before." When Miss Kent left shortly afterwards for a visit to her home she told him she would hope to have a good report of him on her return. He replied that she certainly should because she had been so good to him that he was going to be better when she was away than if she was there; and he kept his word.

Unfortunately the last month of school brought something of a slump. Mr. Lambert came home, and his bad example was reflected in his son's more obstreperous school conduct.

His teacher was tired out and ceased to make the effort that had enabled her for a time to control the boy, falling again into the habit of sending him to the office at the first sign of trouble. However, the year ended without more serious incident, and Seth was duly promoted.

During the summer the visiting teacher kept up an active correspondence with Seth, as with many of her other children; this she regards as an essential part of her work with them. In one of his letters he wrote, "Miss Kent, please have a good time and try not to worry about me because I am being a good boy and am going on a Y. M. C. A. camp next week." His good record remained unbroken and upon her return he greeted his friend with enthusiasm.

By this time Mr. Lambert was again in jail, and Mrs. Lambert was almost frantic over the family situation, so that one of Miss Kent's first acts was to call in the Associated Charities once more. Seth's school situation was hardly less desperate; he had been placed in the room of the most unsympathetic teacher in the school. The visiting teacher endeavored through the principal to secure a better placement, but was unsuccessful; Seth was to come to school regularly and give no trouble or he would be suspended and placed in the school for incorrigibles, she was told.

Miss Kent knew her boy and knew his teacher. She saw the inevitable end if he was left where he was, and determined on a bold move.

First she made a special visit to the school for incorrigibles —a small separate one-room building in charge of a quiet-mannered middle-aged woman who was directing the work of some eighteen boys, presumably the worst in the whole city, though from their appearance and their behavior in this school no one would suspect that such a dire record lay behind them. After studying the classroom situation and

talking with the teacher Miss Kent came to the conclusion that a transfer to this school, instead of being a form of punishment for Seth as had been implied, would be the best thing that could happen to him. She consulted the superintendent and arranged for it. Seth and his mother were quite ready to accept her plan, the reasons for which she carefully explained to them.

After a month's trial came the dictum of the boy's new teacher already quoted in our title—which brings us once more to our starting point. If the path we have pursued seems devious, here is a fact that may show it the short-cut it actually is: during her first year's work with Seth the visiting teacher had made one hundred and twenty contacts with the boy.

The second year was, by contrast, a placid one—until toward its close. Seth grew in the good graces of his teacher; while not an angel by any means, he proved himself "a very lovable boy" who did his best. He rarely lost his temper.

Then came trouble in a new form. Perhaps a suggestion of spring in the air raised a spirit of deviltry in Seth and a group of comrades. At all events they got into the habit of annoying a Chinaman, running into his shop and out, slamming the door and so on. One day he pursued them and, catching Seth, haled him to juvenile court. There it appeared that, some years before, the boy had been brought in on some charge of about equal seriousness.

A great opportunity now presented itself—or so it appeared to the visiting teacher and the probation officer. A public spirited man was interested by Miss Kent in Seth, and offered to pay his expenses at a boarding school which it was believed would give him a rare opportunity for development unhindered by the obviously bad influences of his home. Unfortunately Mrs. Lambert displayed the blind

prejudice against this plan so often shown by parents on such issues. The judge placed the boy on probation.

Despite Mr. Lambert's return home from jail soon afterwards, and his outrageous conduct, which resulted in several arrests that spring, Seth made a good record both for scholarship and conduct during the remainder of the school year, and was promoted.

His friends, however, were still in constant anxiety lest he succumb to his father's evil influence. His mother began to grow accustomed to the idea of his going away, was willing to listen when the project was broached. It is the hope of teacher and visiting teacher that the judge may in the near future be persuaded to make the desired placement, and to this end they were still working and planning as school closed.

* * *

Of all the boys in this group, Seth Lambert is perhaps the one who is laboring under the severest social handicaps; a delinquent father in the home is an even greater menace than one who has abandoned it. Had fate not thrown the visiting teacher in his path one questions whether any other influence would have proved powerful enough to carry the boy safely through these two difficult years. Obviously the future holds every sort of possibility, but Seth apparently possesses character and capacity for growth and if he can be removed to surroundings which will encourage him in well-doing there seems good reason to believe that he will develop wholesomely.

The close supervision given this boy during the first year is noteworthy. Still more so is the fact that close as it was Seth, despite his objection to being bossed, never resented it. "The child . . . is sure to know whether his teacher

understands him or not, whether she loves him or not." . . .[1] So with the other adults who order his life; from one of whose love he feels sure he will accept what would be intolerable coming from another.

[1] "Some Extra-Curricular Problems of the Classroom," by Bernard Glueck, M.D. *School and Society*, Feb. 9, 1924.

V

SEX PROBLEMS

"Sex education cannot begin too early. . . . The first thing for the parent to bear in mind is that the more knowledge a child can collect before it experiences the feelings normally incidental to puberty, the better for it. . . . The duty of the parent is, of course, to allow the child's curiosity to be stimulated from without by a reasonable contact with nature and the animal kingdom, to encourage him to ask questions fearlessly on every subject, and to let him learn that he can do so with perfect confidence. But there is obviously no good purpose served by such questions unless the parents are prepared to cope wisely with the valuable opportunities thus presented. . . . There must be no hushing up, no suggestion that the child is naughty, silly, or even gauche to ask such questions."

H. Crichton Miller, M.D., in
The New Psychology and the Parent

"No one characteristic of cultural progress is so marked or so important as the repression under which the sexual instinct has fallen in the course of development. And, too, as a result of that repression, no aspect of the personality has suffered such manifold distortions and disfigurements. . . . Sexuality needs to be recognized if for no other reason than because it *is* and it cannot be dealt with by refusing to see it. The child also needs to be recognized, for the same reason, as possessing a sexual instinct and that instinct needs due consideration in the process of its growth and development. . . . This involves a dignification of sex to the same level of importance as other functions of the individual, bodily or mental, with the object of attaining to that emotionally calm consideration of sex problems which will insure the bringing of the sex instinct into line to serve the individual and the race under the direction of the conscious ideals guided by the intelligence."

William A. White, M.D., in
The Mental Hygiene of Childhood

V

SEX PROBLEMS

TWO of the narratives here grouped together deal with adolescent girls, two with small boys. In visiting teacher work, as in the juvenile court, adolescent boys are seldom referred as sex problems.

The stories of girls here presented illustrate types of situations frequently met by visiting teachers and others who seek to do preventive work with adolescents. Nancy, lonely and restless, had in her compensatory effort to create a life for herself already established a reputation that must be lived down. Gladys through sheer youthful exuberance and recklessness had been led into one situation which threatened to be a drag on her for the rest of her days. Diverse as are the methods used by the two visiting teachers, a common underlying philosophy and purpose will be apparent to those who read between the lines. Fundamentally, it is by helping children to live the fullest and richest lives of which they are capable, by leading them to employ their powers in constructive, satisfaction-bringing activities, that wasteful, destructive behavior tendencies are best counteracted.

A point of equal importance illustrated in the first of these stories is the part which talking things out may play in the reorganization of a child's life. When a girl has had no one in whom she can confide with assurance of being understood, no one to whom she can turn with questions that perplex her, the finding of such a person may well cause a revolution in her inner life. The need of a wise counselor, to whom one can open mind and heart in complete confidence, has long

been recognized in human experience; it is reemphasized and reinterpreted by modern psychology as one of the profoundest needs of the emotional life.

Another point deserving of attention is the social situation which these girls were obliged to face. Nancy's story furnishes evidence, and Gladys's still more striking evidence, of the difficulty with which a record once made is blotted out. That adults occupying so authoritative and so influential a position in the community as do teachers sometimes place unnecessary obstacles in the way of children who seek to retrieve mistakes is a fact that should not be overlooked.

No less significant are the attitudes of the adults in the equally typical stories of two small boys who were sex offenders. The manner in which well-intentioned parents of average intelligence may wreck a child's life is strikingly illustrated in the first of these stories. Contrastingly, the second seeks to make clear how one wise lover of children succeeded in lifting almost intolerable burdens from a child's mind, thus deflecting him from a line of definitely anti-social conduct and freeing his energies for normal growth and happiness.

"Far Gone"

A GIRL of seventeen who is still lingering in the eighth grade after being twice left behind by her class, who absents herself when she chooses, and who, when present, spends more time in flirting with the older boys than in studying, is naturally a serious school problem. It was with such a record that Nancy Barnes was referred to the visiting teacher in the fall.

Her teachers, past and present, had little good to say of Nancy. Up to the last year she had indeed done good work;

late entrance into school and several severe illnesses seemed to account for her retardation, and as there was no psychologist in the community a scientific study of her abilities and disabilities had never been made. She was attractive, the teachers admitted, and was bright enough, could do her work when she chose; but she had long since ceased to choose anything but the path of least resistance. She lived with an elderly aunt who could not control her. She was seen on the streets at noon, after school, sometimes in the late evening as well, after being absent all day. She seemed to know every young man in town, and was very frivolous and flapperish in her manner with them, standing on street corners by the half hour with one, letting herself be picked up for an auto ride with another, appearing at soda fountains and movies with a third, in rapid succession and with the most casual manner. She had one bosom friend, a girl of about her own age named Florence. Which one influenced the other more was hard to say, but it seemed certain that neither did the other any good. One and all, her teachers agreed that Nancy was "far gone," would not amount to anything.

The visiting teacher gave due weight to all the evidence she could gather, but experience had taught her the importance of making her own observations as well.

Before speaking to the girl, she spent some time in her classroom unobtrusively observing her. Nancy was a pretty, slim young thing, with a long, delicate, oval face and large, dark eyes. She answered, "I don't know" freely, giving scant attention to the lesson and evidently making no effort at all. She was simply and neatly dressed. She carried herself with a grown-up air, but it was easy to see that she was still very much of a child.

Thus fortified by observation and report, Miss Graham

asked Nancy to her office to talk over her school failure. The girl appeared, evidently prepared for a grilling regarding her conduct. It did not come. Instead came a gentle inquiry concerning her home life. Nancy began to cry. Yes, she was happy, she said—but she was not like other girls. Her mother had died when she was five, and her father had soon after gone west leaving her in care of a widowed sister-in-law, with one daughter, now a woman of thirty. This aunt was a semi-invalid. While their relations were not unfriendly, Nancy felt that she hardly existed for the older woman; there were no confidences between them, and the girl had formed the habit of going her own way and keeping quiet about her affairs. The one relative who counted for something in her life was her grandfather, her mother's father, who paid her board and whom she visited for a few weeks every summer. He was a prosperous farmer. He lived far back in the country where there were no schooling advantages. Nancy was very fond of him, and he of her. Her father, at last accounts, was married and living in California; he had never shown any interest in his daughter.

Coming to immediate issues, Nancy explained that she had met many young men through her cousin, who worked in a popular drug store which served as a rendezvous for hosts of young people. Nancy did not hesitate to say that she knew everyone thought her indiscreet, but she defended herself on the ground that she was about old enough to look out for herself.

The visiting teacher talked very plainly to Nancy about the effect of careless conduct upon a girl's reputation. She called Florence in and discussed with both girls together the serious aspects of wasting such opportunities as the school furnished them. A recent episode in which the two were known to have cut school to go automobiling with some

young men was touched upon, likewise frequent tardiness at afternoon sessions, known to be due to noon-time appointments. The influence the girls had on one another was pointed out; the visiting teacher even suggested that their companionship was not helpful, and advised each girl to give careful thought to her own conduct and where it was leading her.

As to school work, Nancy assumed full responsibility for her failure; she had not really tried for a year, she admitted; she had been coming to school just for fun. Miss Graham arranged for her to join a tutoring class in arithmetic at once. The girl had been receiving 'C' in effort, a sure sign of low interest. This she agreed she could easily change. She would be glad to report once a week to the visiting teacher to give her own estimate of her work. Her manner was very sweet; apparently she had begun to see things from a new point of view. She was quite willing that a visit should be paid to her home.

Mrs. Barnes proved to be very much absorbed in her own aches and pains; as soon as Nancy and her problems were introduced into the conversation she became limp and lackadaisical. How could a poor invalid be expected to keep track of a lively girl like that, she wanted to know. If anything was going seriously wrong she would have to send the girl away to her grandfather; she just could not be bothered about her.

Miss Barnes, the cousin mentioned by Nancy, impressed the visiting teacher as hardly better fitted than her mother to cope with the girl's problem. She was absorbed in her own affairs, had never assumed any responsibility for Nancy and apparently had no conception of what it would mean to do so.

One practical point Miss Graham did succeed in getting

over in this interview: Mrs. Barnes was entirely willing that Nancy should come home to lunch, instead of taking a box to school. As the home was a good fifteen minutes' walk from school, in the opposite direction from Nancy's down-town haunts, Miss Graham felt that the girl's noon hour might well be occupied in this way.

It was evident to the visiting teacher that while the home was a good one from the physical standpoint there was little to build on there. She determined, therefore, to work with Nancy alone.

Next day Nancy herself furnished another opening by coming to the office to deny some of the statements made by the visiting teacher to her step-mother. She was not unpleasant, but wanted to clear herself if possible. A report just received from one of the teachers enabled Miss Graham to back up the statements in question with specific details of recent careless conduct. Again she emphasized the girl's own ability to weigh and judge the worth of what she did. A clear distinction between character and reputation was drawn, and Nancy was led to appreciate how each was affected by her behavior. She was told that a certain city official had spoken of her being so often seen hanging about the drug store corner. A policy of frankness was established, the visiting teacher agreeing to point out indiscretions of Nancy's, not in a nagging way but with the aim of building. Nancy confided that no one had ever talked to her in this way before. She accepted the suggestion of going home for lunch and realized that doing so would help in solving her problem.

After this conversation Nancy formed the habit of dropping in almost every day for a few words with the visiting teacher, and discussed plans freely with her. She believed that her work was improving. She talked of various boys

who called upon her at home, of a dance she had attended, of one youth who had gone away and was writing to her. Miss Graham told her she was old enough to receive company and emphasized the point that home was the place for her to see her friends. The visiting teacher's matter-of-fact, friendly way of taking whatever was told her as a natural part of a girl's life encouraged Nancy to talk freely of her affairs. The outlet was good for the girl.

Then came a disappointment. The monthly reports were given out, and Nancy's showed no appreciable change. It was necessary for Miss Graham to begin all over again with the girl, pointing out that more than a few weeks of effort were needed to convince teachers of a radical change in long-observed habits.

In another month results began to show; the principal and most of Nancy's teachers agreed that there had been marked improvement, though her room teacher still remained unconvinced that any real change had occurred. It was slow work to rebuild a reputation, but encouraged by the visiting teacher the girl persisted, and by mid-years general recognition of her better work had been won, and she was promoted to the upper eighth grade. Note writing and flirtation with school boys had long since ceased, and the girl's behavior on the street no longer excited attention. She was happy in her new experience of success and in the general approval shown.

Meanwhile Nancy's friend Florence had been in serious trouble. This situation brought home to Nancy the dangers she had escaped. Miss Graham talked with her a long time, explaining many things that a developing girl should understand. No one had ever put life to her in any such way, and she was eager for the right interpretation. A new bond was

established, and Nancy became more confidential than ever, seeking advice about her recreation and companions.

Throughout the second half of the year this new relation with the girl was maintained and strengthened. On the side of school work encouraging progress was made; B's and even A's began to appear on Nancy's monthly report cards, which she brought proudly to show her adviser. When a question arose in the visiting teacher's mind about the desirability of a new friendship formed by Nancy with a fifteen-year-old girl, it was possible for her to talk the whole matter out frankly with her young friend. In the end, there being no better companionship available as a substitute, she suggested that Nancy undertake to act as a control over the younger girl. This plan appealed greatly to Nancy, implying as it did a confidence in her own newly developed sense of responsibility.

The close of the year brought not only promotion, but a record so good that Nancy passed on to high school with every prospect of success there. She reported that her grandfather was highly pleased to learn of her standing and was ready to pay for her training at a business college, if that should seem advisable. Her own joy in her progress and vivid interest in planning for the future gave promise that the fine start she had made would lead on to new achievements.

A question naturally arises in the mind of the reader of this narrative as to the fate of the companion figure of its heroine. Florence, Nancy's friend, has lived through as bitter and tragic a year as a girl well could. The visiting teacher's efforts to rouse her and her parents to some appreciation of the dangers she was running, and to effect a home adjustment which would protect her from certain temptations, proved unavailing. She became pregnant. She

confided her condition to her lover, pitifully confident that he would marry her. He disappeared next day. Her child was born dead; she herself was seriously infected with both gonorrhea and syphilis and has been for a long period under treatment. Her parents have stood by her; she has remained at home, and has become a quiet, retiring girl, utterly different from the reckless child of the preceding year. What her life is to be, cut off as she is from all the normal social joys of youth, is a question that may well occupy the attention of workers with girls in her community.

Supplanted

IT was as a sex problem that Sandy Gibbs was referred to the visiting teacher in the spring of his first year at school. His parents had been greatly upset when he came home one day with his clothing badly torn and told a story about sex play with an older boy in the basement of the school. The principal had gone to the bottom of the affair, proving the older boy entirely blameless and Sandy the aggressor. Mr. and Mrs. Gibbs were disposed to "put the child away" at once. The principal suggested that Miss Lawrence be asked to interest herself in him. Mrs. Gibbs said she would be glad to have the visiting teacher call.

Miss Lawrence talked first with Sandy. She found him rather a large boy for his seven years, attractive and well dressed. He seemed pleased at the interest taken in him and was quite ready to talk on the topics she introduced, which were mainly connected with his play life. With a view to keeping him actively employed out-doors she inquired particularly whether he possessed such things as roller skates or a tricycle; he had nothing of the sort, wished that he had.

Before she left the building Miss Lawrence emphasized to the principal the importance of seeing that the child was kept busy every minute of his time in school.

An interview with Mr. and Mrs. Gibbs followed, at their attractive home in a fashionable neighborhood. They were prosperous people of fair intelligence; he was a partner in the leading dry goods firm of the large suburban town where they lived, she had been a teacher. Both had been previously married and widowed, and each had a son. Sandy's own mother had died when he was four years old. Ronald, Mrs. Gibbs' son, was twelve and in junior high.

The present Mrs. Gibbs was a handsome, vigorous woman with a domineering personality. She was apparently much attached to her husband, but gave him little opportunity to talk. It was evident that she had supreme confidence in herself; she was sure she understood the children, and felt herself fully able to cope with any situation that might arise. Ronald had been a model child from the day of his birth, a fact for which she took much credit because of the excellent training she had given him. Sandy, on the other hand, transgressed with every breath he drew; and for his innumerable faults she held his mother largely accountable.

The catalogue of Sandy's sins was a long one. His manners, at table and elsewhere, were intolerable; he lied constantly, admitting the truth only when forced to it; he had formerly shown an ungovernable temper but was learning to control this; he masturbated; he displayed so much sex curiosity that he had to be kept away from little girls; he did not love his present mother and said so.

Indications of the disciplinary methods employed in dealing with these faults were few, but significant. In order to scare him and break him of lying the parents had taken him to the police station. He had lied again next day. Mrs.

Gibbs had "talked to him" about masturbating, quite without effect.

Miss Lawrence tried to draw Mr. Gibbs out regarding Sandy's early years when his own mother was alive. The mother had, it appeared, been "very nervous"; what little the father had to say indicated that the child had been entirely normal. Mrs. Gibbs broke in with the remark that Sandy's mother had been unable to control him but had kept this fact from her husband so that he thought he had a model son.

Before the visiting teacher left, Sandy came in, bringing his report card. It showed a number of "Goods," one "Excellent," and one "Fair." Mrs. Gibbs looked at it and remarked, "Not very good, Sandy." The boy made no answer. Presently, at a word from the mother, he went upstairs to change to his play clothes. Mrs. Gibbs' attitude toward the child impressed the visiting teacher as one not likely to win response from a difficult youngster.

Miss Lawrence, on this first visit, ventured to offer two suggestions. One related to a detail of management: a pair of roller skates would, she thought, help to keep Sandy actively and wholesomely employed out-of-doors. The other went down to fundamentals: Mrs. Gibbs had undoubtedly a problem to solve, but Sandy was having an unhappy time of it, too. This Mrs. Gibbs would not admit. It was evident that she did not permit Mr. Gibbs to show sympathy for the boy.

From a teacher who had known the former Mrs. Gibbs Miss Lawrence learned that she had been a very sweet woman and that Sandy had been an exceptionally attractive baby, admired by everyone. His mother had never wearied of dressing him up and showing him off. Mr. Gibbs had been less liked in those days, as he was very outspoken, sometimes

to the point of being disagreeable. He had domineered over his first wife.

As to Ronald, reports from school sources fully confirmed Mrs. Gibbs' account of him. He really was an excellent boy—always did good work, never had any conflicts with authority. Everything seemed to come easily to him.

Sandy's brief school record indicated that he too was of good intelligence; but he annoyed his teacher by doing foolish things to attract the other children's attention—putting his thumbs in his ears and flourishing his hands about, making funny faces, and so on. Once recently he had stolen a penny from another boy and bought chewing gum with it. When the teacher questioned him he said merely that he hadn't any money and wanted the gum.

Miss Lawrence had another talk with the boy, longer and more intimate than the earlier one. He did not speak freely at first, appearing rather repressed in manner. He liked his mother and father and Ronald, he said—apparently giving back statements that had been drilled into him. He acknowledged that he had masturbated, but said he didn't do so any longer as his father had told him that if he did he would die. He admitted taking the money, and gave the same explanation he had given to his teacher; he promised to replace the coin when he had one. The visiting teacher carried away the impression that the child was affectionate by nature.

Visiting Sandy's class soon after, Miss Lawrence was asked by his teacher if she would like to hear the boy read. He read remarkably well, and the visiting teacher commended him warmly on his performance. The look of appreciation that passed across the child's face told how much this praise meant to him, and throughout the rest of the visit he gave the best of attention to the work in hand.

In conversation with Miss Stevens, the principal, about this time, Miss Lawrence explained the situation as she saw it. The principal agreed that constant comparison of Sandy with Ronald was a chief cause of trouble. She told of another significant incident: Sandy had been sent to school one morning that winter without any breakfast "because he was so bad." He had been actually sick. Miss Stevens had called up the Gibbs home and demanded if they thought that the way to treat a seven-year-old child. Mrs. Gibbs had replied that she felt she must do it because Sandy was so disobedient. Miss Stevens had stated that if it happened again she would notify the Humane Society.

The school year was now nearing its close. Miss Lawrence called once more at Sandy's home and found Mrs. Gibbs alone. The mother's attitude toward the boy was somewhat more hopeful; he had behaved very well when ill recently; she felt that the visiting teacher had helped him, expressed appreciation, and hoped she would continue to see him next year, as he was fond of her.

Miss Lawrence took advantage of this favorable opening to explain that one thing which worried Sandy was the constant comparison between himself and Ronald; she urged that Mrs. Gibbs cease to hold her son up as a model, and seize every opportunity to praise Sandy. The mother admitted that there might be a good deal of truth in this interpretation of the situation, and showed more fair-mindedness than might have been expected from her attitude in the earlier interview.

Thus the situation, as the school year closed, was distinctly hopeful.

Soon after Miss Lawrence's return, in early September, she met Mr. Gibbs on the street and learned from him that Sandy had given no serious trouble during the summer,

though he was sometimes disobedient. Mr. Gibbs hoped she would continue to take an interest in the boy. He remarked that Sandy had been a problem before he came under his step-mother's care. His own mother had shown her love for him in a very demonstrative way. After her death he had been cared for by an elderly friend of the family who though fond of him had not made any display of her affection. She found him very difficult to manage. Mrs. Gibbs was also fond of the child, but was not demonstrative, the father explained.

September had not come to an end when a report of trouble with Sandy reached Miss Lawrence. In the school play room he had persisted in doing inane little things, evidently with the intent of making the other children laugh, so that the play teacher had felt obliged to put him on the platform four times in one period.

The visiting teacher had a talk with the boy. He appeared glad to see her and said he liked his new class. She had, however, considerable difficulty in holding his attention; he did not follow what she said, and when she finished speaking would begin to talk about some entirely unrelated matter.

Small annoyances of the sort described continued during the fall and winter. In addition Sandy began to show defiance, refusing flatly to hang up coat and hat or to carry out other directions. On the playground he chased the little girls, picked quarrels with the boys, and was a disrupting influence generally.

Not all the reports received during this period were, however, so unfavorable. Sandy's teacher, acting on a suggestion from Miss Lawrence, tried the experiment of showing the boy many outward signs of affection and found that he did his work much more willingly. He read particularly well

and gave evidence of being really fond of reading. His work in general was indeed quite satisfactory; there was never any question as to his receiving the regular mid-year promotion.

A visit to the Gibbs' home that fall had made it only too clear that no improvement in Sandy's behavior there or in the handling of his problem had taken place. Some ladies were calling when Miss Lawrence arrived and with them she listened to a long recital of Ronald's wonderful exploits. Sandy was not mentioned till after the visitors had left.

It then appeared that the boy was still a constant source of annoyance. He was disobedient and defiant, refusing to do the little things required of him, and lied frequently. There had also been an extreme development of masturbation on his part. Mrs. Gibbs declared that he often lay awake at night for an hour or more indulging in auto-erotic practices.

Miss Lawrence suggested that sex practices carried to such an extent as described called for medical attention, and urged that Sandy be taken to the family doctor and the entire situation explained to him. This Mrs. Gibbs agreed to do. At the same time she would take up the question of a tonsil and adenoid operation which had been advised by the school physician.

In November came a report of misdemeanors on the playground which included swearing. In a talk with Miss Lawrence which followed, Sandy tried for the first time to defend himself by putting the blame for his misdeeds on the other boys. To many questions, moreover, he returned a blank "I don't know"; his attention was difficult to gain or hold. It was explained to him that everybody had to earn affection just as his father had to earn money for food and clothes; that if he wanted to be liked by the children and by

his teachers he must give up swearing and annoying them and do his best to earn their liking.

December brought evidence of yet other unfortunate behavior trends. Sandy was reported for having deliberately abused a cat; he had wedged her into a corner and had then used a breast drill on her until he nearly went through the skin, continuing regardless of the animal's yowls until someone came to the rescue. This it appeared was not the first time he had shown such a tendency to cruelty.

About the same time the boy began to take candy from a nearby store without paying for it. He was made to pay up later with his own money, but was not deterred from repeating the experiment. His parents found it useless to scold him, for before they could finish what they were saying he would begin to talk about something else. His disobedience became still more deliberate and defiant: for example, once during a visit in a household where there were children the mother of the family explained that no child was to take candy before dinner, whereupon Sandy walked up to the table where the candy was and helped himself to a large piece.

It was in December, too, that Mrs. Gibbs called up Miss Lawrence one day to tell her that Sandy had announced that he never paid any attention to anything that the visiting teacher or anyone else said to him.

Soon after Sandy's promotion Miss Lawrence held a consultation with his new teacher and the principal in which she explained the boy's difficulties in some detail and asked that special plans be made to interest him and bring him out of himself so that he might be weaned away from his autoerotic indulgences. She told his teacher that Sandy would undoubtedly annoy her, but asked her to be patient with him. Both teacher and principal responded cordially. A

plan for trying the boy out in the third grade was soon after put into effect and as he showed ability to handle the advanced work he was given an extra promotion. His first report in the upper grade was the best he had ever received.

Yet, close upon this effort to aid the boy to a better adjustment, came renewed reports of trouble in the home. Sandy could not be trusted to do errands any more, as he would take anything he could lay hands on and lie about the matter afterwards. He also continued to show a great deal of sex curiosity where little girls were concerned, thus proving a source of much anxiety when other children came to visit.

On the day when these facts came out Mrs. Gibbs talked again of the boy's own mother who she said had been subject to violent temper tantrums, and of her family, several members of which had shown poor mental balance. Mr. Gibbs and his first wife had not, it appeared, been very happy together. She had in a way used Sandy to make up for his father. After her death her relatives had displayed no interest in the child until Mr. Gibbs married again, when they made an effort to get in touch with him. Mr. Gibbs had then refused to let him go to them.

In this interview Miss Lawrence discussed with the mother a project she had been revolving in her mind. What would the parents say to placing Sandy for a time in a certain small institution especially equipped for the study of children presenting behavior problems? This school received some children committed through the courts and others voluntarily brought there by parents and guardians. It was connected with a clinic where careful physical, psychological, and psychiatric studies of the children were made. After such study and a period of observation its director would be able to

advise the parents how best to meet the problem before them.

Mrs. Gibbs was favorably impressed by the account given and authorized the visiting teacher to make arrangements for placing the boy in this school.

In response to a letter which Miss Lawrence now wrote an answer came from the head of the institution in question which seemed to hold out good hope that Sandy might be received there for study by the end of the school year. However, two months later another letter brought disappointing news: so many boys had been received from the courts that there would be no opportunity to take any on voluntary commitment.

Thus as the school year neared its close the prospect before Sandy Gibbs and his parents was as dark as ever. Miss Lawrence had not only advised consultation with a competent physician, she had mentioned several, skilled in this field of behavior problems, who might be consulted in the nearest large city. Mr. and Mrs. Gibbs had however neither taken the case up with their own family doctor nor made any move to consult any one else. Although Mrs. Gibbs now acknowledged that the situation was becoming too much for her, she continued to let matters drift. The family was planning to move out of town, and thus Sandy would not return to any of the schools served by Miss Lawrence. All the efforts of the visiting teacher appeared to have gone for naught.

* * *

The story of Sandy Gibbs offers so many points of interest that it might have been placed under at least three of the earlier group-headings.

As a study in parental attitudes and their influence it is

second in interest to none of the narratives which form the first group. If the account of family relationships given is to be trusted, we have here a situation so frequently found in psychiatric studies that it may be regarded as typical of many which have produced problem children and unadjusted adults. The mother who, failing to find in marriage the happiness that she had hoped for, pours out her devotion upon an only child never suspects what trouble she may be preparing for him. Accustomed to being the center of interest, the adored and petted king of the household, during his most impressionable years, how is the child to adjust himself if suddenly, without warning, his adorer and playfellow vanishes and he finds himself in strange hands, in a world as alien as North Dakota might seem to one reared in Florida? Indulgence and coaxing are now replaced by the demand for obedience; he who has always been entertained is expected to amuse himself; he to whom love has always meant tender words and caresses must learn to recognize it in the stern guise of "doing what is for his ultimate good" or other equally unalluring form. When this frigid régime becomes embodied in a stranger who, suddenly appearing on the scene, unaccountably absorbs the interest of that sole link with the past, his father, how is the child to get his bearings? If in addition he must stand by while another child receives the adulation that was formerly his, who can wonder if the strain proves too great to be borne?

Again, Sandy's obviously good intelligence and the absence of clear indications that he felt himself inferior to his step-brother should not blind us to the probability that we have in him a developing inferiority problem. This, however, throws us back at once upon the more fundamental issue of parental attitudes. Clearly the boy's record furnished opportunities for bestowing upon him the praise

that every child needs to satisfy his ego demands and serve as an incentive to effort. Whether lack of intelligence or lack of love more largely accounted for the denial to him of such innocent satisfactions is hard to say; that undercurrents of jealousy, doubtless unrecognized and therefore all the more dangerous, swayed the step-mother's conduct is more than suggested by the record.

Of the various unhealthy activities by which, if our interpretation be correct, Sandy sought to compensate for his starved love-life and corroding sense of inferiority, his sex activities appear the most striking. Not that masturbation and sex curiosity are at all unusual features of child life; modern students in this field have indeed established the fact that such manifestations are all but universal among young children. In such an extreme form, continued over so long a period, they are, however, decidedly unusual, and should always receive careful study and treatment. The possibility that a physician might discover some physical cause should not be overlooked, nor yet the possibility that a child with these traits may prove to be psychopathic, with an abnormal interest in sex. This latter interpretation cannot, however, in the opinion of most modern psychiatrists, be definitely made in a young child, and the only proper attitude for parents, teachers, and social workers to take is one of hopefulness and willingness to experiment.

From the standpoint of causation, it should be recognized that an original physical impulse to auto-erotic expression is likely to be enormously intensified in a child who is deprived of the normal love-life suited to his years. Especially is this true when such deprivation follows upon a period of excessive demonstrativeness on the part of a loved parent.

The youngster, accustomed to find satisfaction in the arms of an adoring mother, finds himself abandoned, resourceless, craving a comfort which long custom has made essential to him. If, groping blindly for a substitute, he finds it in auto-eroticism, and finding it there, prolongs what is with most healthy, happy children a mere passing phase of development, who shall wonder?

Turning to the question of treatment, we need to recognize first of all that such measures as those employed by Sandy's parents are more likely to increase the trouble than to cure it. Since no amount of fear can insure against a repetition of the act, the child ordinarily soon learns that the destruction threatened is not to be looked for immediately. He then either begins to doubt the parent's word, or if he accepts it as law, is haunted by a sense of impending doom which may very seriously hamper the free use of his mental powers. In addition, by centering his attention upon what might otherwise have proved a passing interest, the threat tends actually to prolong the period of auto-erotic activity. Statements that death, that insanity, that loss of memory or other faculties, are likely to result from masturbation are not only wholly unfounded in fact, but are likely to do serious injury to the child who accepts them.

The question of what part a social worker or other interested outsider can play in such a situation as Sandy's is a difficult one. When misinformation has not already been given and a wrong attitude developed, and when, as occasionally happens, a parent is willing to turn over the responsibility to such a worker, she may, if thoroughly equipped, do an important bit of educational work. In the present instance Miss Lawrence was probably right in feeling that only a physician with experience in handling complicated situations of this sort could undertake to untangle all the

threads involved and reeducate parents and child. To indicate the steps of such an educational or reeducational process is of course beyond the scope of this volume.[1]

Rumor and Reputation

FORDHAM school was fairly buzzing with gossip the day the visiting teacher was called in. Helen Stone had told a group of girls a lurid tale of an all night joy ride with Gladys Winter and two men. The principal had talked over the telephone with the mothers of these two eighth grade girls, telling them that until the truth was known neither girl could attend any school in the city. She had then called up Miss Cleveland and asked her to investigate.

Mrs. Winter, reluctantly keeping an appointment at the school, was there when Miss Cleveland arrived. She still felt that since the affair had taken place out of hours it did not concern the school. Gladys had told her everything, had been severely punished and thoroughly warned as to the risks she had run. Mrs. Winter was indefinite as to the hour when the girl had reached home, but was sure that she had been in bed by two o'clock. When Miss Cleveland referred to a whiskey bottle and a roadside inn supper which had figured in Helen's account, Mrs. Winter showed clearly that she had not heard of these details. She finally invited the visiting teacher to call at her home next day.

The antagonism the mother had shown at the beginning of this first interview, already on the wane before its close,

[1] Books which will prove helpful to adults confronted by sex problems in children are: "Parents and Sex Education, Children under School Age," by Benjamin C. Gruenberg; "The Father and his Boy," and "The Biology of Sex for Parents and Teachers," by Thomas W. Galloway; "Plant and Animal Children: How They Grow," by Ellen Torelle. The first of these books is published, and all are recommended, by the American Social Hygiene Association, 370 Seventh Ave., New York.

had quite vanished by morning, and Miss Cleveland received a friendly welcome. The home was a comfortable, well-kept apartment above the grocery store run by Mr. Winter. Gladys was there—a tall, well-grown girl with a pretty tilted profile and reddish hair that clustered round her head in large curls. She was decidedly sulky. The story she told was substantially the same as Helen's, except for the midnight supper and drinking episodes; on being questioned about these she admitted shamefacedly that both had occurred. The girls had not, however, been out all night; Helen had acknowledged to Gladys having touched up her story to impress her audience.

After this visit, and another to Helen's home, the visiting teacher reported that the situation was less serious than had appeared. She did not, however, succeed in mollifying the school principal, who refused absolutely to have the girls in her school any longer. The assistant superintendent therefore called up Garfield school, which Gladys had attended until this fall, and in which she had made a uniformly good record both for scholarship and for conduct, and arranged for a re-transfer. Helen she transferred to still another school, as far as possible from the present one. In neither case did she offer any explanation of her action, even to the principals concerned, beyond the statement that it represented the wish of the school administration.

Just a month later, however, rumor broke out afresh, this time in an even more virulent form. Gladys was reported to be pregnant, her condition dating from the summer, when, it was whispered, she had been out all night with a man. The actual ride of September had thus been dated back some months, the most unfavorable interpretation had been placed upon it, and the worst results assumed.

The principal at Garfield, faced by this tale, tried to sift

it through the medium of a special health talk and examinations by the school nurse for all eighth-grade girls. This plan was nearly wrecked by Gladys, who started to leave the room before the talk and had to be called back. When she had finished her talk the nurse weighed and measured the members of the class, and pushed her examination of Gladys as far as she dared. The girl's answers to her questions indicated a normal physical condition, her weight had increased only two pounds since the year before. The nurse was unable to tell whether or not there was a basis for the anxiety felt.

Though Garfield was not one of the schools served by the visiting teacher, the principal at this point called upon her for assistance; the suspected condition, together with the story of the previous summer's escapade, had seemed to her, she explained, to account for the hitherto mysterious re-transfer of Gladys to her school. One teacher felt so strongly on the subject that she wished to have Gladys excluded from a school play that was soon to be given. In anticipation of a decision to exclude her, and because the principal wanted the visiting teacher to talk with her, the girl had been kept from going to a rehearsal. Miss Cleveland felt, and suggested, that this action would be likely to attach too much significance to her visit.

Gladys, however, appeared quite unembarrassed and was thoroughly friendly and agreeable. She seemed glad to see the visiting teacher and asked her to call on her mother, who had been for some time confined to her bed with rheumatism. Gladys was doing the housework, and pretty much all her time before and after school was absorbed in this way; she was glad she could do this much for her mother. There was nothing in the girl's manner that suggested that she had anything to conceal.

However, it soon became clear that Gladys was not lacking in sensitiveness to the atmosphere surrounding her. The very next day her mother called up. She was disturbed over the girl's report of the nurse's questioning, the drift of which had been fairly obvious, and the visiting teacher's appearance so soon afterward had added to her anxiety. Her husband, she said, was prepared "to make trouble" if the inquiry was pushed any further. He was quite in the mood to take the matter to court, but she had persuaded him to wait until she could talk with the visiting teacher. Would Miss Cleveland please come to see her?

Miss Cleveland spoke to the principal, who arranged a hasty conference with the teachers concerned. There was general perturbation at the turn affairs had taken, and general agreement that a law-suit—presumably for slander—was highly undesirable. The visiting teacher learned that the suspicions cherished by the group had no substantial basis, and would never have arisen had it not been for the rumored episode of the preceding summer. It was agreed that no further action should be taken unless definite proof was forthcoming.

Then Miss Cleveland made her call. She found Mrs. Winter thoroughly indignant and upset; she had sent for the visiting teacher because of their previous acquaintance and her belief that she could get the truth from her. Why was Gladys so singled out in school—called back by the nurse when she started to leave the room, kept from rehearsal to talk with the visiting teacher? Miss Cleveland quietly explained that the girl had started to leave before the health talk which all the eighth-grade girls were expected to listen to; and that, so far as her own interview with her was concerned, there had really been no special need of its being held that day. These explanations satisfied the mother on the

particular points in question, but the fact that Gladys felt herself singled out remained. Mrs. Winter went on to give details of the girl's physical condition which, if her truthfulness was to be accepted, made it clear that there could be no possibility of pregnancy. The parents were ready to prove, in a court of law if necessary, that their daughter was "all right."

Miss Cleveland succeeded in convincing the mother that such drastic action was unnecessary. How far this result was achieved by reasoning, how far by simple friendliness and a personality that inspired trust, is difficult to say. Before the visit closed the talk had switched to the forthcoming play, and Miss Cleveland, discovering that Gladys was embarrassed for lack of a suitable dress, had offered to lend the girl a wash-frock of her own.

With the reporting back of this interview to the school group, the crisis was over. It was agreed that there was nothing to do but await developments. It may be recorded here that, so far as the suspected pregnancy was concerned, there never were any. The suspicions aroused proved to be baseless.

However, of developments of a kind there were plenty. Gladys was a headstrong young thing, and her past behavior had so far marked her that none of her adolescent vagaries were likely to escape attention.

The next issue which led to the visiting teacher's being called in arose over irregular attendance. Gladys was absent a number of times, and failed to bring notes of excuse. Finally she produced a note signed by her mother which had a decidedly suspicious look: the words "and also Tuesday" had been added, in what appeared to be a different hand, to an original excuse for Monday. As it happened, Gladys had been in school all day Tuesday, but had disappeared

from the grounds with another girl just before the afternoon session on Wednesday.

In the interview with the visiting teacher which followed, Gladys readily admitted that she had gone down town with another girl on Wednesday, without her mother's knowledge. She also, when the excuse was brought to her attention, admitted that she had added the words noted, and called herself stupid for making a mistake in the day. Her attitude, at first sullen and defiant, changed during the interview; she realized what she had done and was ashamed of it, and admitted that there was no reason why the rules of the school should be set aside for her. She promised to come to school regularly and to be absent only with her mother's consent. Since Mrs. Winter was quite ill, it was agreed that the matter of the note should not be brought to her attention unless there should be a second offense. By the close of the interview Gladys had become entirely pleasant.

Even before this episode there had been complaints along another line; one teacher, believed by the principal not to have heard the earlier rumors regarding the girl, had declared that Gladys disturbed her class by smiling at the boys. Then came a day when two teachers witnessed a scene in the school yard: a boy was sitting in Gladys' lap, and when they rose to their feet he threw his arms around her. The principal gave the young people a scolding and punished them by various deprivations such as forbidding them to go into the school yard for a week. Then she sent for the visiting teacher.

Miss Cleveland talked with the girl, speaking very plainly about the attitude of the sexes toward each other. Gladys was not at all sullen, was quite willing to admit she had done wrong, and promised to behave differently in future. Her classroom teacher, brought in by the principal,

accused her of having been impudent when corrected. Gladys cried and apologized of her own accord. The interview ended with a better understanding all around.

The next outbreak occurred a month later. This time the trouble arose over a half-box of cigarettes found by Gladys in the street, and a note, inadvertently left by her in a note-book in her desk. The cigarettes were surreptitiously smoked by Gladys and two other girls in the basement. These proceedings were promptly reported by some smaller girls to the principal who passed on the word to the eighth-grade teacher. The latter, wishing to discover whether Gladys had more cigarettes in her possession, searched the girl's desk. She found no cigarettes, but in a note-book discovered the note—in itself a harmless enough document, but proof positive that Gladys wasted school time in frivolous ways.

The interview between the visiting teacher and Gladys which followed was a stormy one. Miss Cleveland had purposely laid on her desk the note-book together with the note torn from it. The girl's eye fell on them as she sat down, and indignantly she demanded when they had been given to the visiting teacher and by what right her desk had been searched. She was exceedingly angry and took no pains to control herself, tearing up note-book and note in her wrath. Miss Cleveland paid no attention to this display of temper. Dealing quite impersonally with the whole issue, she pointed out that Gladys had violated the school rules, thus putting herself outside the trusted group, that her attitude and actions had not been such as to inspire confidence. Gladys finally admitted that her conduct had been enough to provoke a search, but still insisted that her teacher should have asked her if she had cigarettes in her desk.

As to the smoking itself, the girl declared she had not

thought of doing such a thing until she found the cigarettes; she had known she would get caught but hadn't cared, just did it to provoke her teacher. Something of her daredevil mood persisted until Miss Cleveland asked if her mother knew of the affair; Gladys admitted that she didn't, and when requested to tell her burst into tears, crying, "I can't do that, I can't do that." Finally she was persuaded that it would be better for her to tell her mother than for the visiting teacher to do it. Since she had shown no appreciation of the exception made for her before in the matter of the falsified note, there could be no evasion of the issue this time.

When Miss Cleveland called at the home a few days later she was most cordially received by Mrs. Winter, who at once stated that she knew of the smoking episode and was very sorry it had occurred. Gladys, she said, was like one of her father's sisters—very headstrong and defiant. She was a hard child to manage, but was very good-hearted, and was best held through her affections. The mother realized fully all the child's faults and weaknesses, but felt that she understood her and could bring her safely through. She wished the principal would be kinder to her; Gladys felt she was not wanted at school. She was anxious to feel herself part of the school, wished she had some small responsibility there.

Again the visiting teacher talked with the principal, endeavoring to explain the mother's attitude. She suggested that Gladys be tried with small responsibilities, but found the principal firmly opposed to any such experiment on the ground that the girl could not be trusted, would loiter in the halls if sent on errands, and so forth. Miss Cleveland felt confident that what Gladys needed was a lift, something to live up to, rather than constant antagonistic supervision; but she hesitated to push her suggestion.

Next month there was yet another crop of charges; it is noteworthy, however, that the nature of these diminishes in seriousness as time goes on. This time Gladys was complained of for not taking physical exercises with her class and for writing silly notes in school. She admitted both charges: she felt foolish, she said, running around the desks, but took the arm and bending exercises.

Knowing that the girl was really interested in athletics Miss Cleveland asked her if she would like to have charge of a group of younger girls in physical work. Gladys said she would, and the visiting teacher promptly took up with the principal the question of assigning her to this task.

The same opposition was once more encountered, but this time Miss Cleveland persisted, and the physical director was called in. She proved entirely willing to give Gladys a trial, and to the girl's great joy she was enrolled with two other eighth-grade girls to guide and train a group of little fourth-graders. This responsibility involved meeting with the physical director and a number of other leaders, once a week, for special training.

The results of this experiment were encouraging. For a time the girl's room teacher reported marked improvement in her attitude, to a point where it was felt that she deserved encouragement. As for the physical director, when asked how Gladys entered into her work she replied: "There isn't a nicer girl in the group. She is just lovely about everything."

The school year was not to close, however, without a final crisis. Gladys was within a few days of graduation when it arose.

A slight episode of the preceding week had somewhat prepared the way for trouble by renewing her room teacher's annoyance with Gladys. One hot day the girl had rolled

her middy blouse sleeves up above her elbows. Other girls in the class were wearing dresses with the typical short sleeves of the season, but Miss Thompson disapproved of Gladys' action; as she later explained to the visiting teacher, "There are boys in my room and I have to protect them." She commanded the girl to roll her sleeves down again or leave the room. Gladys left the room.

This episode, however, was no more than a curtain raiser to the real drama. Here another girl, Amy Duffield, at first played the leading role.

Amy's family had recently returned to town after several years' absence. She and Gladys had been neighbors and playmates as small children, and had been delighted to renew acquaintance. Amy lived at a distance and brought her lunch. She had been taking it to Gladys' home to eat. One day the room teacher, Miss Thompson, discovered the fact, informed Amy that it was against the rules for the children to eat their lunches away from the school building, and forbade her to do so again. Amy explained that her mother knew and approved of her going to Gladys' home. Miss Thompson declared that this made no difference, adding that she "didn't want Amy to associate with Gladys Winter anyway." Amy flatly disobeyed, going as usual to the Winter home.

There was not a scintilla of evidence that Gladys was in any way responsible for this defiance of authority, but the fact did not prevent her teacher from seeing in her the instigator of the offense; that is what a reputation does for one. All the exasperating episodes of the past year leaped to Miss Thompson's mind, and when, just before the close of the noon hour, she saw Gladys nonchalantly playing a ukelele in the school yard her irritation overcame her and she rushed out and commanded the girl to stop.

Gladys didn't stop. Miss Thompson, infuriated at this fresh defiance, went straight to the principal. The principal hurried out into the yard to call Gladys to account. The girl had abandoned the ukelele and, crossing the yard, had nearly reached the basement entrance. The principal, following swiftly, called out to her. The girl turned and looked back, but did not stop. Catching up with her in the basement the principal demanded that she come at once to the office. Gladys replied that she would do so as soon as she had got herself a drink, and a few minutes later made her appearance.

In the interview that followed Gladys was perfectly unobjectionable in manner. She had not heard the principal's call, she said; she had indeed seen her coming across the yard but had not dreamed it was in pursuit of herself. Her explanation was not deemed satisfactory and Miss Cleveland was telephoned for.

There followed interviews with Mrs. Winter and Gladys, and with the school group—separate sessions, a joint session, and a last long private session in the principal's office. The principal began by expressing her determination to suspend the girl and keep her from graduating with her class. The mother was greatly incensed. In the course of the discussion Miss Cleveland used every argument her ingenuity could devise. Among other things she suggested that there might be difficulty in explaining the remark of Miss Thompson's about not wanting Amy to associate with Gladys, and reminded the principal of the affair of the fall, Mr. Winter's anger over it, and the fact that the suspicions then entertained had proved baseless. The principal was finally persuaded to abandon her stand, and Gladys was graduated.

Because of the painful experiences of her past year, the

girl has decided not to go to high school. She will probably take a business course later.

To supplement this story, a word should be said regarding the later history of Gladys' chum, Helen. This girl was transferred to a school on the outskirts of town farthest distant from the school which the visiting teacher served, so that, as the city is a large one, active supervision of her became an impossibility. Some months after the episode in which she figured with Gladys she became seriously involved with a boy. The affair came to light. The visiting teacher was again called in. Helen, displaying the same highly colored imagination which had led her to exaggerate an earlier episode, declared herself pregnant, but proved not to be so. Transfer to yet another school was arranged for her, and she finished happily an otherwise unhappy year. She was promoted to high school. Up to the present time no rumor of fresh scandal has touched her. She says she has learned her lesson and intends to lead a normal life. Her parents, whose harshness seems to have been largely responsible for her mistakes, have come in part to realize their error and the home situation is somewhat relieved.

* * *

In Gladys Winter it is clear that we have an adolescent girl in whom the wayward impulses of that period are of more than average strength; but it is also clear that we have a girl of many good impulses, really devoted to her mother, a worker, with a capacity for throwing herself into various wholesome interests which augurs well for her future. Her great need is to have all her energies directed into productive channels. In obtaining for her the opportunity to lead in play Miss Cleveland was working on a sound psychological principle.

The attitude of the school group toward the girl's problems seems also to call for comment. Doubtless each teacher who joined in the hue and cry after Gladys was influenced, so far as she was aware, solely by the motive of upholding moral standards and protecting other children from contamination. But modern analytical psychology is teaching us that the motives of which we are aware are by no means the only ones which operate in any given case; that human behavior is determined by causes far more complicated and, many of them, far more obscure than we have been wont to suppose. When the particular bit of behavior under consideration is an attack upon the reputation of a young girl, it is highly probable that full analysis would reveal less impeccable motives than those named. "In the teacher we are confronted first and foremost with a living, pulsating human being, with needs and desires and aspirations as intense as our own may be; a human being subject to frustrations and denials, loves and hates, and a zest for making his or her personality count . . . quite as keen as that of the rest of us."[1] If her own energies have been largely employed in repressing natural impulses, she is likely to view with horror expressions of the sex instinct which are natural and not unwholesome in the adolescent girl. If she has developed the feeling that she must, at whatever cost, make her authority felt and acknowledged, she is likely to respond to trivial misdemeanors with an emotional intensity out of proportion to the event. Like the rest of us, the teacher who is called upon to deal with a child in trouble needs to make very sure that her attitude is completely objective and unbiased, free from any emotional coloring due to prejudice or past experiences of her

[1] "Some Extra-Curricular Problems of the Classroom," by Bernard Glueck, M.D. *School and Society*, Feb. 9, 1924.

own; and that she is making every possible effort to understand the child, her peculiar personality difficulties and the influences that have combined to make her what she is. "Nothing less than this ought to gain for her the privilege of coming into so intimate and so authoritative a contact with the lives of young children."[1]

A Case of Scare

GIUSEPPE CICCARONI was slow in his work and "seemed particularly nervous"—so his fourth grade teacher said, in referring him to Miss Richards. She added that he was a very shy and peculiar child—never looked one straight in the eyes, walked along like a little old man, seemed afraid both of her and of the other children. It was apparently impossible for him to get his school work, especially arithmetic and reading. If any special notice was taken of him he would cry.

To Miss Richards, as she observed the child in the class room, it appeared that his trouble was due to fear. He was not given to the restless fidgeting and fussing that, in school children, commonly goes under the name of "nervousness." He was a dark-skinned little fellow, small for his ten years and appearing smaller because of his trick of sidling along when he walked. His eyes had the look of a frightened animal.

When the visiting teacher tried to draw the boy into conversation he answered her questions politely but offered no explanation as to why his school work was poor. He thought he could get his reading better if he could take a reader home, that his big brother Ben would help him.

When the subject of his fears was led up to, Giuseppe admitted that he was afraid—afraid of the dark, of "big men,"

[1] See footnote, page 242.

of colored children, of "boys who want to fight." Every night when he went home, he said, the big boys chased him. His brother told him to fight them back, but he was afraid of getting hurt, so would call them bad names and run.

Giuseppe's family lived in a small detached house in an Italian district on the outskirts of town. His parents, both of whom were past fifty, spoke no English. They ran a small macaroni factory, and Giuseppe's three big brothers were all engaged in either the manufacturing or the distributing end of the business. The youngest of these big brothers was nearly twice Giuseppe's age; he was a high school graduate. The only younger child was a little boy of five, so that Giuseppe was the sole school attendant in the family. One of the big brothers, interviewed by the visiting teacher when she called at the home, promised to help the youngster with his lessons, and the principal allowed him to take home books for study.

About this time a psychologist who examined Giuseppe found him below average intellectually—dull though not defective. These findings, taken with the fact that English was not spoken in the home, seemed sufficiently to account for the child's difficulties with his school work. Efforts were made to get in touch with his other big brothers and make further plans for assistance at home. These efforts for the time being failed, as the visiting teacher repeatedly called without finding any of the younger generation.

So matters drifted along for a month or more. Then suddenly a crisis arose. Giuseppe's teacher intercepted a note written by him to Jimmy Donati, an eight-year-old classmate. It was a "very bad note"—full of vile words, with references to relations between the writer and a little girl. The teacher showed it to the principal, who advised that she call the visiting teacher and let her manage the case.

Miss Richards took Giuseppe into a quiet room where they would be secure from interruption. She began by telling him that she thought he needed help and that she would do all she could for him if he would try to remember certain things that she was going to ask him about. She promised him that she would not tell his teacher or the principal what he said unless he himself wished it to be reported.

She then asked the boy if he remembered the first time he ever heard any bad words or swear words. He replied that he did. Soon after he entered the first grade, in another school, some big boys forcibly detained him in the basement one day during school hours. They said swear words—"words like you hear in church and bad words that are nasty." At first Giuseppe denied that anything further happened at this time, but when encouraged by the visiting teacher to remember everything, he said that they had exposed themselves to him and had persuaded him to follow their example. Afterwards he often met them in the basement at certain periods. These words and these actions always made him afraid.

The following year he went to another school. Here he heard no more bad words, but if boys chased him he always remembered the things those other boys had taught him and said the things they had said. Later—this was when he was in the third grade—he learned from other big boys at the corner grocery about self-abuse, and at their suggestion began to practise it. That was the reason he didn't sleep well, Giuseppe said. These big boys also told him about sex relations, and the results that followed intercourse; they described in detail their experiences "out in the woods with big girls."

All these things made him afraid and made him run when the boys chased him.

Coming down to the matter of the note, Giuseppe acknowledged having written it, but said he had never done any of the things that he wrote about, had never had relations with any little girl at all. He supposed he wrote in this way because of the way the big boys had "lied to him" about their relations with girls. He often talked to little boys about the things the big boys had told him. He realized that writing and talking in this way meant that he wanted to tell these little boys things in just the same way that the big boys told him when he was in the first grade. He was much ashamed of the note and said he would ask his teacher to forgive him.

Mere willingness to acknowledge wrong-doing was not, however, the goal sought by the visiting teacher. Miss Richards tried to make the child see that he had been afraid because his mind had been full of things that he thought were bad, and because he had been doing things that he felt weren't right. She tried to make clear to him, however, that since he hadn't really been going with little girls, hadn't been doing to them any of the things he wrote about, he was still a good boy and that he must help other boys be good by not passing on to them the things he had heard. It was agreed that he should start all over again, and that in the future the subject of this conversation should never be men tioned unless Giuseppe himself should come to the visiting teacher for some information, or unless he should do something that necessitated reopening the topic.

Later on the same day Miss Richards had a talk with Jimmy Donati. As the child knew nothing of the note she was careful not to mention it, or to let him know why she was making a point of seeing him. She did ask him, however, if he had been hearing bad words. He said yes, that Giuseppe had told him some "swear words." He had told his mother,

and she had said that he shouldn't play with Giuseppe any more.

Next day came a report from the fourth-grade teacher: Giuseppe "seemed to have taken a new lease on life;" he had actually asked to be allowed to assist her by passing papers, a thing unheard of from him before. Fortunately this teacher was a very understanding and tactful woman, well fitted to handle a difficult problem. A week later she reported that the boy was doing much better: he was trying to stand straight and to look her in the eye when he talked. His school work, however, was so poor that unless it improved soon he would have to be put back a grade.

To the visiting teacher's great regret it proved impossible to prevent this demotion. The child was moreover shifted to the room of a teacher who, with the best intentions in the world, seemed unable to maintain consistent discipline. One day she nagged, the next she attempted to persuade. As a result, almost every child in her room was a problem.

Even in this unpromising situation, however, Giuseppe has proved able to hold his own during the three months that have elapsed since the change. There have been no complaints of him, but on the contrary reports of improvement.

Several circumstances have apparently aided the boy in maintaining a good record during this period. Soon after his demotion the visiting teacher sought an opportunity to talk with him alone. She explained to him that even though he had been put back a grade he was making great progress; that he stood straighter, walked more erect, and looked every one in the eye. He replied that he was not so afraid as he used to be. He said also that his brothers were helping him with his work evenings so that he hoped, now he was repeating, that he would be able to do better.

The visiting teacher at the same time warned Giuseppe

especially to be careful not to say any bad words to the boys and girls in his room. This one reference to the past she felt to be really necessary, as the boy's present teacher felt so intensely on the subject of misconduct along sex lines that the least deviation in this direction would probably never be forgiven.

After this conversation the points for which the youngster was praised became still more outstanding. When he saw Miss Richards coming his shoulders would go back and he would stiffen up like a little wooden soldier.

Another influence that helped keep Giuseppe happy and hopeful was that of his former teacher. He fell into the habit of calling on her afternoons after school, showing her his papers, and talking of the possibility of once more being promoted to her room. This promotion became the goal of his ambitions. At the same time he got on well with his present teacher, and won from her a recognition of the fact that he was trying his best, even when his gains on the academic side seemed slight.

Lest any reader gain the impression that the visiting teacher fancies she has transformed this ten-year-old youngster into a model of wisdom and virtue, we cite an additional episode. Dropping in on the Ciccaronis one day last spring Miss Richards was beamingly welcomed by the boy's fat little mother, who ushered her into the living room. There, wedged among the huddled family belongings, with a bed on one side and a dish-closet on the other, sat Giuseppe at the kitchen table. Pencil in hand, he was bending over a strange-looking circular structure of cardboard with four concentric rings of figures about its outer edge. "Mike buy it—one doll' "—explained Mrs. Ciccaroni; "Now Giuseppe no more troubl'." Her quaint little figure fairly radiated pride and satisfaction.

Examination disclosed that the mysterious object was a calculating machine of a type unfamiliar to statisticians and banking firms. Initiated into its intricacies by his big brother, Giuseppe had been for weeks past busily engaged in shoving in and pulling out cardboard slides, with a resulting notable improvement in his marks on arithmetic home-work. Proudly he displayed his prowess in adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing by this new method. He had even attempted to induct little Tony, the five-year-old, into the new art—but the youngster displayed a disheartening and unaccountable indifference as to which process he employed, appearing equally delighted whatever number popped, under his manipulation, into the little circle dedicated to results.

Had she been possessed of a harder heart or a less humorous outlook, the visiting teacher might have felt it her duty to shatter at a blow the smiling satisfaction of her little pupil-patient and his mother. Instead, she encouraged the youngster to exhibit his apparatus and explain its use, entering into his pleasure in the performance while she endeavored to keep a straight face. She then tactfully led him to realize that, with all its advantages, this device was not a satisfactory substitute for the ordinary methods of calculation. He would not be able to go around the world with his machine under his arm, for example. Giuseppe saw the point. The fact that the cardboard slides were already nearly worn out under his ministrations offered, however, the best assurance that he would soon return to ordinary school room methods.

Innocence of any intent to deceive had been stamped obviously upon this whole performance. Indeed, one of Giuseppe's hopeful traits was his honesty. When his teacher, praising him one day for a good spelling paper, remarked that he must show it to the visiting teacher when she next called,

he remarked with a sigh, after a reflective pause, "Well, I guess I ought to show her the bad one I had yesterday."

In a recent talk with Miss Richards the boy confided to her that his small brother was suffering from some of the same fears that he himself had known: he was afraid of colored people, and of being chased—had "the same scare in his legs that I used to have." After the matter had been fully talked over, Giuseppe came to the conclusion that he could help his little brother get over his "scare."

* * *

Several vital principles of mental hygiene find clear illustration in this case. On the one hand the technique of the visiting teacher's interview with Giuseppe is worth noting: her care to secure a quiet spot, free from danger of interruption; her preliminary explanation, which made clear that this was to be no "punitive expedition" but an honest attempt to understand and help, with genuine respecting of confidences received; her encouraging attitude, the very opposite of the denunciatory and condemnatory. On the other hand one notes the effect upon the child of giving his confidence for the first time; the release from the thralldom of intolerable fears, the new self-respect suddenly gained when, the worst admitted, this all-wise, all-comprehending grown-up shows that she still respects him, makes him feel that he is not hopelessly bad, that he can still help others to be good.

When a generation of adults—teachers, parents, social workers—proves itself able to deal thus with the hidden anguish that lurks in the minds of sensitive children, the "kingdom of evils" in this world will be already half overthrown.

THE PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF VISITING TEACHER WORK

By Howard W. Nudd

THE PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF VISITING TEACHER WORK

By HOWARD W. NUDD

Chairman of the National Committee on Visiting Teachers, affiliated with the Public Education Association of the City of New York

EVERY teacher, every social worker, and many a parent is familiar with the problem child—the boy or girl whose school progress or whose reactions to normal requirements point toward later inefficiency, delinquency, or some other failure in personal or social adjustment.

What is the trouble with such children, and what can be done for them? How can the school obtain and utilize a knowledge of the forces that are affecting their success, and give them in fullest measure the benefits of their educational experience? Puzzles or pests at home, in school, or elsewhere, their personal welfare and the welfare of society require painstaking effort in their behalf. They cannot wisely be regarded as but temporary nuisances, whose present weaknesses a kindly fate will in some way heal with the balm of time, nor can they wisely be ignored, without serious study and effort, as inevitable liabilities which society must expect along with its blessings. To-morrow they will be citizens, for weal or for woe, and their shortcomings to-day, if left uncorrected, may have dire effect upon the character of their citizenship to-morrow. They present at once the most baffling, the most urgent, and the most interesting problems in the field of education.

Some of the ways in which the school is approaching these juvenile problems and is seeking to forestall later adult

unadjustment through the work of the visiting teacher are well illustrated by the stories presented in this volume. These stories, as the foreword indicates, are drawn from actual cases in a score of communities where the National Committee on Visiting Teachers is cooperating with local school boards in carrying on demonstrations of this work as part of the Commonwealth Fund Program for the Prevention of Delinquency. It is appropriate, therefore, to summarize what the Committee conceives to be the nature of this work and its contribution to school practice, outlining the general function of the visiting teacher, the types of problems she handles, the treatment she applies, the preventive character of her work in relation to other school departments, the gradual evolution of school procedure which has revealed the need for this service, the origin and growth of the movement itself, its present status, and the outlook for the future.

FUNCTION OF THE VISITING TEACHER

The visiting teacher's treatment of problem children is based upon the fact that useful citizenship and right living are the normal outgrowth of sound training and wholesome behavior in childhood and that the attainment of these ends is vitally affected by environmental influences and by the child's attitude toward himself, toward others, and toward the opportunities and the obstacles he may encounter. His scholastic progress and deportment in school, his heredity, his emotional nature, his interests, ambitions, and dislikes, and the experiences which evoke the reactions that shape his character thus become the subjects of the visiting teacher's inquiry and take her into the home, the classroom, or wherever a situation exists that may help to reveal and explain the causes of his difficulties.

School failures or dissatisfactions are usually symptoms of serious underlying causes which make or mar the foundations for success in after life. But, while the school occupies the strategic point in education and should provide a wealth of wholesome organized experiences, nevertheless it is but one of the many forces which influence the child's life and create the attitudes toward self and others which determine so largely his achievement and behavior. It is sometimes, indeed frequently, forgotten that during the months when school is in session the child is in attendance but five out of twenty-four hours each school day. This means that he is in school scarcely twelve per cent of the time, that during the eight years of his elementary education only one eighth of his time, or a period equal to one year, is spent in school, and that the greater part, equal to seven years, is spent in the home, the neighborhood, or elsewhere, under influences that are either strengthening or undermining the work of his teachers.

It is quite obvious, therefore, that if all the factors which enter into this process of development are to be understood thoroughly and made to count most for the child and society, the educative influences in home and neighborhood, which operate during 88 per cent of the time, must, so far as possible, be coordinated with those of the school, which operate during the remaining 12 per cent. Particularly is this true of those children who give promise of later serious unadjustment. To understand such children and give them their full chance in life, it is essential that the school, the home, and every social agency which may influence or guide them, be mutually aware of the causes of their difficulties and cooperate in an enlightened and constructive program.

It is equally obvious that the performance of such a delicate and complicated task requires insight, skill, and a

high degree of personal fitness. For not only do the problems of these children involve an infinite variety of contributing causes which must be disentangled in each particular case, but they require an intimate knowledge of the resources of the school, the home, and the community, if the difficulties are to be wisely removed and replaced by helpful influences.

For that reason, the school has been turning to the visiting teacher,[1] a comparatively new specialist who has the two-fold basic training and experience of a teacher and a social case worker. The person who performs the intricate task of adjusting the difficulties of problem children cannot be merely a sympathetic visitor between the home and the school, a messenger, only, of good-will and good tidings from one to the other. Helpful as that is, if it were all that were needed the task would be simple indeed, and doubtless anyone with a kind heart and a pleasing personality would suffice.

Like everyone engaged in the profession of education, the visiting teacher must have not only the essential qualities of personality, but the technical equipment needed to understand and to deal effectively with the factors which comprise the specific problems in her field. To cooperate intelligently with teachers and school officials in the discovery and removal of handicapping conditions in the school itself, she must know professionally, by training and experience, the aims and procedure of the school. To aid parents and social agencies to cooperate effectively with each other and with the school in achieving an adjustment of the child's special difficulties, she must be able, through training and experience in social case work, to seek tactfully and skill-

[1] In some places she is known as a home and school visitor, or a school counselor.

fully for underlying causes in the home and the community and to understand clearly what social resources can or cannot be employed in any given case. In order that she may help the child to adjust himself to the opportunities in his environment and overcome the obstacles presented by his own personality, it is particularly desirable that she be familiar with the principles of modern psychology and psychiatry, and thus be equipped to detect adverse symptoms and call upon the specialists in these fields for aid whenever necessary or desirable.

It is evident that this is not a field for the novice or for one fitted solely to skim the surface of difficult situations and to prescribe palliatives. The visiting teacher must be a skilled craftsman who can analyze thoroughly the problems which confront her and can marshal social and educative forces inside and outside the school for clear and specific purposes. She naturally does many things directly to remedy a given situation, but her aim is primarily not to duplicate what can best be done by others, but rather to bring into effective cooperation, for the welfare of the particular child, those agencies or measures which her knowledge of the situation indicates as essential.

TYPES OF PROBLEMS

The visiting teacher's services are devoted primarily to the needs of those individual children who present problems of scholarship or conduct of a baffling, erratic, troublesome, or suspicious nature, or who show signs of apparent neglect or other difficulties which the regular staff of the school finds itself unable to understand or to deal with unaided. Such children include those who, for some unaccountable reason, fall below standard in scholarship, although they are not sub-normal; the repeater, the restive, and the over-age who

are counting the days until they may "go to work"; the precocious and the gifted who have difficulty in finding full scope or wholesome outlet for their interests and abilities; the adolescent who appear unable, without special guidance, to avoid the pitfalls they encounter; those whose conduct gives suspicion of undesirable companionship or unwholesome interests and shows tendencies toward unsocial behavior or delinquency; the irritable, the worried, the violent-tempered and the repressed; the indescribable who are perpetually stumbling into difficulties or getting out of tune with their environment and who are always in need of counsel; and the apparently neglected, abused or over-worked, whose home conditions appear so adverse that special assistance, supervision, or guidance is needed.

Such children, unless early adjustment is made, not only miss the full advantage which the school affords, but may drift from bad to worse, arriving only too frequently at the children's court or some other corrective agency. To meet these problems, which are both educational and social in nature, the visiting teacher utilizes her double experience as teacher and social worker. As has been indicated, what is required in each of these cases is better understanding and closer cooperation on the part of all who are molding the life of the child. The visiting teacher is specifically equipped, not only to find out why things are not going right in the lives of these children, but also to take back to the class teacher, the parent, or the social agency which may help, the essential information needed to meet their individual limitations. In order to do this effectively, it is frequently necessary for her to work intensively on cases for a long period of time. Despite this fact, she cannot always be successful in overcoming the obstacles that may be hindering the child's progress. In the great majority of cases, however,

her efforts do produce results of a far-reaching character and secure a satisfactory adjustment of the child's difficulties.

TYPES OF TREATMENT

As a result of the new facts she discovers, the school is enabled to see what the actual situation is and to become aware of the real need of the child. It can often modify requirements to meet the newly seen limitations by changing the class, transferring the child to a special school, shifting emphasis from one phase of school work to another, adopting a new approach to the child, or connecting his school work more closely with his outside interests.

Frequently the visiting teacher effects the desired result by changing the child's own attitude toward his problem, through explanation of his conduct and its consequences, through encouragement and supervision, or through the substitution of wholesome activities for harmful ones.

Many times, the adjustment of the difficulty lies in the home. A change in diet or in hours of sleeping may be desirable, or perhaps a shifting of hours for certain chores, a lightening of housework, a cessation of illegal occupations, the correction of conditions which make for immorality, a change in attitude toward the child or in methods of discipline, or an increased interest in his success or failure at school.

To remedy some situations, the visiting teacher may put the child or the family in touch with a social agency that will furnish relief or employment, a play-ground director or club leader who will furnish interesting substitutes for exciting dime novels or unwholesome movies, a convalescent home for an invalid parent, a day nursery to relieve an older child of the burden of caring for younger children while the mother is at work, a psychiatric or medical clinic, or a score or more

agencies and opportunities of a special character, depending upon the local resources that can be mobilized in any particular case.

As a representative of the school, the visiting teacher is free from the suggestion of philanthropy and has a natural approach to the home, going as she does in the interests of the child. Through her acquaintance with families and the neighborhood she is frequently able to bring about social results of a far-reaching character. Her efforts have stimulated various communities to provide scholarship funds, nurseries, community houses, homes for neglected children, and other social activities. Hidden danger spots are not infrequently brought to her attention by parents who have not known what to do about them or who have been afraid to report to the proper agency or official. This often leads to such improvements as better policing and lighting of parks, better provision for play-grounds, closing of improper movies, etc., checking of traffic in drugs to minors, and the removal of similar insidious conditions. In addition to what she may do for the particular children referred to her, therefore, the visiting teacher's work may thus be helpful in a more general way to all the children in the school and neighborhood.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES THE GOAL

The value of the visiting teacher's work is naturally in proportion to the extent to which she can get at the trouble early, while it is still in the preventive stage and before it drifts into a correctional or incorrigible problem or causes serious retardation that is well-nigh hopeless of solution. The measure of her devotion to this task is the measure of her most helpful contribution to the school and to the broader field of preventing misfits and delinquency.

Retardation, chronic non-attendance, truancy, delinquency, and similar forms of acute unadjustment are milestones well along the way of a child's falling from grace and are usually the outcome of a series of antecedent factors, at first relatively simple in character but growing with increasing momentum in seriousness and difficulty of solution. To the extent, therefore, that the visiting teacher's participation in solving the child's difficulty is postponed until these milestones are reached, to that extent her greatest usefulness, as a preventive force, is sacrificed. The more rigorously she is held at a distant post, the less she can do for the children who have not reached that post, and the more she is changed from a preventive to a corrective agency.

It seems necessary to emphasize the importance of getting at these problems early because of the common tendency to overlook what appear to be simple things and to let them slide until they become so acute and so obvious that something drastic must be done about them immediately. The old saying, "Never trouble trouble till trouble troubles you," depicts a fatal human tendency to procrastinate that is only too common in the treatment of problem children.

It frequently happens, in the initial employment of a visiting teacher, and sometimes for a considerable period thereafter, that the mistake is made of minimizing the importance of her work with problems which seem remote, and therefore less serious and less important at the time, and of emphasizing the value of her services to children whose problems have become almost overwhelming because of past oversight or neglect. The school seems to focus its attention upon a certain arbitrary danger point at which conduct becomes misbehavior and back-sliding becomes failure, and until the erring child drifts into the restricted circle of vision which encompasses that point, his approach

to it remains unseen in the outer darkness. When this happens, the visiting teacher is usually kept so busily occupied with the mass of serious problems that have accumulated, and that are constantly being augmented by the new cases which drift into this circle of obvious danger, that she has no time to prevent further accumulation by dealing with the children who have not yet become bad enough, in the judgment of the school, to need a major operation.

It is quite natural, perhaps, that first thought should be given to problems which are most advanced and most pressing and that those which are less obvious and less troublesome, however preventive of later and more serious difficulties their prompt treatment may be, should be compelled to give way to those which must be handled immediately to clear off the official slate. It remains true, nevertheless, that adequate provision for utilizing preventive rather than corrective measures is more economical in the long run and contributes most to the welfare of the children and of society.

RELATION TO SPECIAL SCHOOL DEPARTMENTS

In view of this fact, it is important that due consideration be given to the place of the visiting teacher in the school system and to the conditions under which she must work. While detailed discussion of this point is impossible here, it is evident that although she must cooperate closely with all special school officials, particularly the nurse, the psychologist, and the attendance officer, her work should not be made a substitute for theirs but, rather, supplementary to it. Frequently she secures results on her own cases with their assistance, and at times she can aid them in the solution of their specific problems when additional knowledge of the social and educational needs of the children in ques-

tion might be helpful. But her own work is primarily in other directions, for the child's health or mental status may or may not be a factor in his case, or he may have a perfect attendance record and yet present problems of scholarship or behavior which require the help and advice of a person with the special equipment of a visiting teacher. Where health, mentality, or attendance are found to contribute to the problems she is handling, she naturally refers such matters to the appropriate department and solicits its co-operation, just as she refers other matters to social agencies. Were she to devote her efforts largely to obvious health or attendance cases it is evident that to that extent her time and energy would be diverted from problems of erratic scholarship and behavior which are outside the province of the nurse or the attendance officer, but which are equally important and require equally painstaking care and attention.

As the importance of utilizing the technique of the case worker in solving a variety of problems which involve social factors has become more generally recognized, there has been a tendency in some places to confuse the functions of the various school departments in which the use of this technique is desirable. Good administration requires the definition and coordination of the work of all these departments in such a way that wasteful duplication is eliminated and the danger avoided of achieving an apparent simplification, either by ignoring some of the essential functions or by making their performance practically impossible.

The visiting teacher is especially in danger of suffering from this tendency. Because she is a newcomer in the field of education and is skilled in the technique of case work, it sometimes happens that, in the zeal to apply her methods elsewhere, an unwise short-cut is attempted by assigning to her cases which should properly go to the nurse or to the

attendance officer. When this is done, or when she is regarded merely as a new emergency aid to help stem the tide which has grown beyond the control of an inadequate nursing or attendance staff, it is inevitable that she should be so overwhelmed with cases outside her field, which usually demand immediate attention to meet legal or other imperative requirements, that she is compelled to sacrifice her own specific work. As has already been indicated, the work of a visiting teacher in constantly nipping difficulties of scholarship and behavior in the bud will ultimately result in lessening retardation, non-attendance, truancy, delinquency, and other problems of a serious character. Such a result cannot be achieved, however, unless she is enabled to devote her attention to children long before their problems reach that critical stage. While her treatment of cases which belong to other departments may socialize and enlighten their work, and while her services will be of great value to the school whether cases are referred to her early or late, it is evident that she works to the best interests of the child, the school, the home, and the community when she gets ahead of the game in treating the problems in her field and prevents unwholesome possibilities from growing into grave actualities.

TERRITORY COVERED

It is also important that the visiting teacher should not be required to scatter her efforts over too many cases or too wide an area. Wisdom dictates and experience has shown that she can work most efficiently in one school or in a group of smaller neighboring schools. For, as has already been said, an essential part of her work is studying the neighborhood, knowing its resources, its lacks and potentialities, its traditions, ambitions, and dangers. As a member of the school staff, she must also be familiar with the school's facilities

and possibilities and come to know intimately the teachers and principals with whom she must cooperate and through whom much of her work is accomplished. The magnitude and intricacy of her task, requiring intensive study of the cases which come to her attention, make it obvious that scattering her efforts would tend to make her work superficial and focus her attention upon the more "advanced" cases rather than upon those where the best preventive results can be accomplished.

HOW THE SCHOOL CAME TO SEE THE NEED FOR THE VISITING TEACHER

To understand more clearly the contribution which the visiting teacher is making to school procedure, it might be profitable to pause for a moment and review briefly the remarkable changes brought about in education during the comparatively recent past that have gradually led the school to realize the need for her services.

During the last three decades alone, the public school system has grown impressively, both in numbers and in attitude toward its problem. It has reached a larger number of children for a longer period of time, and its courses of study and machinery of supervision and instruction have greatly expanded. With ever-increasing clearness it is being realized that in a democracy not some children but all children must be prepared for wholesome and creative citizenship. Hence our compulsory education and child labor laws, which were practically non-existent in the early nineties. Along with this growth in numbers, the vast differences in abilities and interests among children have gradually become recognized as never before. This has inevitably led to a great variety of courses, special types of classes and trained specialists, all of which, when combined with the large increase in

attendance, have forced the cost of education to a height not dreamed of before. The generous public support of these increased costs is striking proof of the general confidence in the increasing efficiency with which the school is mastering the technique of preparing children for the opportunities and obligations of citizenship.

Thirty or more years ago, before compulsory education laws became general, schools were schools, with curricula and methods of a predetermined pattern. Children could take them or leave them as they chose. Those whose aptitudes and interests happened to be appealed to stayed on and were "educated." The rest dropped out, to succeed or fail in the race of life by their own unaided efforts. Whether they became assets or liabilities to society was largely a matter of chance. The school, at any rate, made little concerted effort to understand them or to meet their needs. It stood calmly aloof, separating the sheep from the goats, showering its blessings on those who belonged and expelling the rest to an outer darkness. This process of elimination was as effective as it was unjust. It weeded out the nonconformists and sought to produce in the survivors a marvelous uniformity. Such schools naturally cost less and were far more simple in organization than the schools of to-day, and, in the opinion of some, produced far more impressive graduation exercises. With slight exaggeration, it might be said that, like parts of standard motor cars, the ideas and accomplishments of the surviving children were almost interchangeable, so uniformly did the machinery of education select and fashion them. One might have taken their minds apart, so to speak, mixed the parts indiscriminately, sorted them out again without reference to the original owners, and reconstructed an equal number of similar minds that would have produced an equally impressive graduation

program and could be guaranteed to take all the hills of life "on high."

Then came a fundamental change. The non-conformists could no longer be eliminated so easily. Year by year the laws required the school to provide for a larger group of children of a wider age distribution, and, as was natural, of a greater variety of abilities and interests. The old régime no longer sufficed. The schools suffered severe growing pains. At first they tried the impossible experiment of forcing all of these children through the same process from which they had formerly been eliminated as incompetents. The result was what might have been expected. The "good children," who fitted the traditional plan, succeeded as before. They sat in the front seats, received gold stars, and monopolized honors on the perennial graduation day. A vast number, however—the non-conformists who had formerly been unceremoniously ejected from the company of the elect—fell behind, failing from year to year to meet the old requirements from which they had previously fled.

Gradually the presence of these failures became acutely felt, particularly in the lower grades where they piled up in alarming numbers. The statistical era then descended upon the schools, and after much calculation these children emerged as the "retardation problem." Everywhere tables appeared showing the number of children of various ages in each grade, and indicating by heavy dividing lines, like Jacob's ladder reaching from earth to paradise, the number of children who were "underage," "overage," or of "normal age" for their grade. Immediately a panic struck the educational world and, as one community after another began to compare its "age-grade distribution" with others, a stampede took place. The reputations of local school systems were at stake, and efforts by the score were made to correct bad

statistical impressions. In some places standards of achievement were lowered, and everywhere schemes for getting all the children of the same ages into the same grades, without unduly deranging the sacred curriculum which had been handed down through the ages, became the fashion. This frequently tickled the pride of disappointed parents and led many a harassed teacher to believe that she was conferring a kindness upon backward children by pushing them ahead faster than they should normally go.

From an administrative point of view a perfect age-grade distribution made a wonderful statistical impression and entitled the school system to meritorious mention. In the face of such a situation, it is little wonder that for a time more thought was given to the ebb and flow of mass showings than to the measures which might be taken to further the welfare of the individual children who were plainly out of adjustment with the school. The school was still the mold and the children were to be bent or manoeuvered to fit it. What effect this arbitrary pressure and manipulation might be having upon the emotional lives of these children, what fears, aversions, or antagonisms they might be creating, were almost lost sight of in the urge to make the group record of apparent intellectual achievement look commendable to a critical world.

Nevertheless, this appreciation in statistical form of the vast differences in children, as revealed by the widely varying rate of their progress through school, soon stimulated inquiry into causes and led to a stirring series of events which is still in progress. Efforts, at first cautious in nature but with ever-increasing skill and momentum, were made to measure children's intellectual and physical ability and their rate of achievement in school subjects. At first, as in the inception of the movement to calculate retardation, the

emphasis was placed upon mass showing, rather than upon the use of the tests to determine what might profitably be done for each individual child. It became the fashion for one community to point with pride to the fact that it had fewer morons or more superior children in its school system than had another, or that its children "averaged" better in arithmetic, spelling, or penmanship than did those of another community. For a while the attainment of uniformity of achievement and high averages under the traditional organization seemed to be the ostensible end of the testers, or at least of those who utilized their findings.

More recently, however, there has been a decided tendency to use this valuable technique for the benefit of the individual child. Where this viewpoint prevails, the card index is no longer worshiped primarily as a convenient instrument for tabulating impressive data in which the individual is but an interesting item of information, however valuable such a statistical summary may be. It is looked upon rather as a loose-leaf reference book of vital facts regarding Mary, John, and Peter, which must be utilized continually in adapting the work of the school to meet their specific needs.

This evolution has been accompanied and helped along by the experience derived from handling extreme cases of unadjustment which became so acute that a different treatment was seen to be imperative. Gradually special classes, with special equipment and specially qualified teachers, were organized for those who seemed incorrigible or who were obviously handicapped mentally and physically, and special courses of study and methods of instruction were formulated to suit their requirements. The development was helped along, too, by the experience with new studies, requiring special equipment and new methods of treatment, which had crept cautiously into the traditional curriculum, despite

the obstruction of the so-called hard-headed, practical folk by whom they were regarded as "fads and frills." These additions represented efforts to find better ways to interest and train those children who could no longer be eliminated and who were more or less vaguely being perceived as problems requiring something different from what the traditional program afforded.

Faced with the problem of educating all children, the school is thus gradually unbending to meet the child, and while it is still far from reaching its goal, it is steadily moving forward. Many of the innovations it has made have naturally been superficially organized in the initial stages and poorly incorporated into the existing procedure. In the groping effort to meet newly revealed problems, all the children have frequently been given a taste of everything, in the hope that they might find something, somewhere, to their liking which they might retain. But after prolonged use of the trial-and-error method, and with the newer insight into child nature and the evolution of better ways to appraise abilities and interests, the school is coming to realize that such patch-work will no longer do, that the tasting method must give way to a more fundamental re-organization.

A smattering appetizer here and there will no longer suffice. It is now generally recognized that children must be graded, instructed, and promoted, from the very beginning of school life, not on the basis of the old rigid system—or to produce statistical results which might shed glory upon the standards of by-gone days—but on the basis of their varied abilities and interests. In many places there is an enlightened effort to formulate differentiated courses of study, flexible programs of grading and promotion, and methods of instruction which find their inspiration in the manifold

needs of individual children. Tests and measurements are coming to be regarded, not as convenient instruments for eliminating this child or that from the benefits of further instruction, but rather as instruments to illuminate their capacities, however limited, and to light the way to a more comprehensive and intelligent system of education which will give to every child "an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life."

In view of the traditional conception of the school as a fact-and-skill-imparting agency, it does not seem strange that this development of educational technique has been largely in the field of intellectual and manual accomplishment and in the improvement of physical well-being. While the emotional life of the child, which gives rise to the attitudes toward experiences which determine behavior, has long been recognized as an important factor in education, it has remained more in the realm of theory than of practice. This has been due, not only to the traditional notion of the school as an agency for imparting information and manual skill, but also to the well-nigh universal absorption of educators in the dramatic movement to measure intelligence and achievement, and to a lack of knowledge and means to deal adequately with problems of behavior. As a result, the school has with increasing efficiency imparted the "tools" and the "intellectual inheritance" of civilization, but has failed to understand and to develop in equal measure those emotional or spiritual traits in the individual child which determine so largely whether he will make or mar the life he might fashion with these instruments of skill and insight.

As measurements of intellectual ability and physical fitness have become more clearly determined, however, and as the progress of children in the attainment of knowledge and skill has been more accurately gauged, it has been

inevitable that other factors in the child's nature, not appraised or explained by these measures, should emerge in bolder relief and present more clearly new problems for the school to grapple with. This explains to a considerable degree the new interest which is generally apparent in the problems of behavior and character. Intellectual accomplishment and physical fitness, while of course recognized as of fundamental importance, no longer monopolize the educational lime-light. The school is coming to see that one may know the truth but the truth cannot make one free unless translated into appropriate action, and that "a sound mind in a sound body" is not the end, but a means to the real end of education, which is sound behavior. It is becoming increasingly recognized that the emotional reactions of the child to his experience in school and in the world outside its walls play a vital part in the school's main purpose to train children for right living and wholesome citizenship.

Intelligence, knowledge, and skill are, of course, invaluable assets whose worth cannot be minimized in the educative process, but in the end, it is the way they are used and the purposes they are made to serve which determine the character of the individual and of society. While a lack of ability, training, or accomplishment is a fundamental handicap which inevitably retards progress and precludes full realization of life's opportunities, perverted strength, whether physical or intellectual, may prove to be a greater handicap, if not, indeed, a greater menace to personal and social well-being. Striking examples of this commonplace fact fill the records of court and clinic and obtrude from press columns and the annals of history. Irrespective of one's place on a measuring scale of intelligence or of achievement in subject matter, right conduct is the acid test of right

living and right citizenship. Not what one knows or can do, but one's attitude towards one's self and others is the mainspring of behavior. Intellectual endowments and good health furnish a wealth of power which may be used or abused, according to the inclinations of the individuals who may possess them. The dangers of reckless driving, as well as the comforts and safety which come from a steady hand, a steady pace, and a smoothly running mechanism, are usually in direct proportion to the power of the propelling force. With a lesser force, one may not go so fast or so far, or experience the superior satisfactions which great force may give, but the greater the force the greater the havoc if the power is misapplied.

It would mark a distinct step forward, therefore, if the school would undertake to handle the problems of behavior, from the beginning of school life, with the same energy which has characterized its efforts to understand and develop the intellectual and physical capacities of children. With the help of the psychologist and the physician it has sought to provide special classes for physical and mental defectives and to grade its former "normal" children according to their varied degrees of intellectual ability. With the help of the psychiatrist, it should seek to appraise their emotional nature and to care especially for the so-called neurotic.

To quote from a recent book which deals with the problems of these latter children, they may be described, for practical purposes, as "children who, for some reason other than intelligence, do not get on in the group to which they belong by reason of their intellectual endowments. . . . Every school teacher is puzzled by the occasional child who is always out of focus in his class, who is persistently too far in the foreground or too far in the background. The background or 'mousie' type of child is frequently overlooked in

school because, while he is young and often later in life, he alone is the sufferer. Yet this quiet, withdrawing youngster, who connects very little with his more boisterous playfellows, may be especially in need of understanding treatment. The foreground child who is a 'pest' is frequently allowed to strengthen his undesirable habits during his first years in school because the teacher is too proud to complain of a seven or eight-year-old pupil. She feels that unmanageable as he is, she must somehow manage him; but any first-aid method which she may happen to devise to keep the peace is not always either therapeutic or educational."[1]

In the class grouping and education of these neurotic children, who exhibit marked aberrations of personality and behavior, as well as in the treatment of individual children elsewhere in the grades whose progress in scholarship and whose responses to normal requirements, though less erratic, present behavior problems of a baffling, troublesome or suspicious nature, it is evident that the school cannot "go it alone." Indeed, one of the most interesting outcomes of its searching inquiry into its task and procedure is the school's growing realization of the fact that it is not an isolated, or semi-isolated, institution which can perform its specific functions efficiently in comparative seclusion. It is simply one, although a very important one, of the many social forces which transmute childhood into adult citizenship. It cannot hope, by its own efforts alone during five short hours, to compete with undermining influences which may be constantly at work outside. "Memory gems," knowledge of history and civics, stories of heroes and great men, educational rituals of one sort or another, may all play a valuable part in training for citizenship, but fine

[1] "Fitting the School to the Child," by Elisabeth A. Irwin and Louis A. Marks.

words do not make fine deeds, and only too frequently lip service is accepted as an adequate guarantee of strong character. By itself alone, the intellectual appeal is inadequate in the training of personality. Feelings and habits of behavior must be constantly nurtured or corrected, as the case may be, in the entire daily life of the child. How children act, in school and out, and why they act as they do are therefore of the utmost importance to education.

The school is obviously in a strategic position to get at the vital and active causes of the child's behavior and emotional reactions wherever they may be manifested and, by soliciting and utilizing every agency that may help, to reinforce conditions that are wholesome and work for the removal of those which may lead to disaster. To achieve this wider influence upon the whole life of the child, however, the school must exercise the same degree of skill and insight that has made possible its progress in other directions. It cannot obtain an adequate knowledge of the conditions outside its walls that are helping or hindering in the educative process unless it is adequately equipped to ascertain those conditions and to appraise their effect upon the lives of individual children. It cannot readjust its own procedure or mobilize forces outside to aid it in meeting the needs of these children, unless it is equipped to secure co-ordinated action for clear and specific purposes. It needs, in short, a specialist who can probe these children's difficulties, in school and outside, and who can utilize effectively every available resource to eliminate the harmful and conserve the good in their environment and in their educational opportunities.

For that reason, as has been pointed out, the school has been turning to the visiting teacher. With her training and

experience both as a teacher and a social case worker, and with her special knowledge of the behavior and personality problems of children, she has the equipment needed for this work and thus represents one of the most interesting and promising of the recent efforts which the school is making to understand the pupil as a child and to meet his individual needs with high professional skill.

Progressive educators realize that the regular teaching staff cannot perform this task unaided. Lack of time and energy, due to the pressure of class work, the preparation of class material, and after-school activities, often prevent teachers from knowing the home and out-of-school life of their pupils. With the reduction in the size of classes and the lightening of the teaching load, and with the development of a greater social consciousness through the addition of courses in social work and behavioristic psychology as part of professional preparation, teachers will in the future, it is hoped, be able to do more visiting than at present, and so become better acquainted with existing social conditions and their effect on their pupils. Even then, however, visiting teachers will naturally be needed to adjust many of the difficulties and to deal with many of the handicapping conditions which the class teacher may find in her visits. For it is evident that, except in extremely simple cases, there is needed a larger experience in social work than the class teacher can be expected to acquire while performing with full efficiency her regular duties. Furthermore, such work not only involves visits during regular school hours to see the mother alone, or at night to talk over with the family group the problems of the child, but requires a flexible time schedule for follow-up work and for emergency calls to various social agencies which the exigencies of class instruction make impossible.

ORIGIN AND EARLY GROWTH

The origin and development of visiting teacher work has been told elsewhere in more detail than can be attempted here.[1] Briefly, the first visiting teachers began work in the year 1906–1907 in New York City, Boston, and Hartford, Conn. In these communities and later in other places, as has frequently happened with other educational experiments, the impulse came from outside the school system. Private organizations—in Boston, settlements and civic organizations; in New York, settlements and the Public Education Association; in Hartford, the director of the psychological laboratory—first saw the need, and privately maintained the work until school boards became convinced of its value and incorporated it as part of the system. In other cities, like Rochester, N. Y., Mt. Vernon, N. Y., and Cleveland, O., the work was introduced directly by the school authorities themselves.

In 1919 the National Association of Visiting Teachers and Home and School Visitors was organized. Through the interchange of experience and the study of methods and common problems, it seeks to develop standards of work among its professional members, and, through personal efforts and the publication of reports, it endeavors to promote the development and extension of the work and to assist those who may establish it in new communities. It holds annual meetings alternately with the National Education Association and the National Conference of Social Work.

1 1. "The Visiting Teacher in the United States," Chap. 1. Compiled by the National Association of Home and School Visitors and published by the Public Education Association of the City of New York—1921 and 1923.

2. "The Visiting Teacher Movement With Special Reference to Administrative Relationships," Chap. 1. By Dr. J. J. Oppenheimer. Published by the Public Education Association of the City of New York, 1924.

In 1921 the Commonwealth Fund included the work in its Program for the Prevention of Delinquency, and, through the Public Education Association of the City of New York, organized a National Committee on Visiting Teachers to establish demonstrations in thirty communities in the United States which presented a wide variety of geographical, social, and educational situations. While the directors of the Fund realized that a great part of the visiting teacher's work is concerned with scholarship, behavior, and other types of unadjustment which, however serious their effect on the child's later career, may not necessarily lead to delinquency, it also realized that much delinquency can be prevented if problems of behavior and personality are adequately dealt with early in the child's school life. The demonstrations established under this program are now in operation in the following communities:

Berkeley, Cal.
Birmingham, Ala.
Bluefield, W. Va.
Boone Co., Mo.
Burlington, Vt.
Butte, Mont.
Charlotte, N. C.
Chisholm, Minn.
Coatesville, Pa.
Columbus, Ga.
Detroit, Mich.
Durham, N. C.
Eugene, Ore.
Huron Co., O.
Hutchinson, Kans.
Kalamazoo, Mich.
Lincoln, Nebr.
Monmouth Co., N. J.
Omaha, Nebr.
Pocatello, Ida.
Racine, Wis.
Richmond, Va.
Rochester, Pa.
Rock Springs, Wyo.
San Diego, Cal.
Sioux City, Ia.
Sioux Falls, S. D.
Tucson, Ariz.
Tulsa, Okla.
Warren, O.

In the process of selecting these communities, explanatory announcements were sent to state superintendents and to superintendents of schools in communities of 5000 popula-

tion or over throughout the country. From the many replies received a tentative list was made of those communities that gave promise of contributing most to the general purpose of the program. From this list, after further inquiry and personal visit, the final selections were made.

The National Committee appoints the visiting teachers, subject to the approval of the local school authorities, pays two-thirds of the salaries for a period of three years, and provides additional funds for necessary expenses. It also provides technical supervision of the work from the central office and holds annual meetings of the entire staff in New York City for the consideration of professional problems. As the purpose of the program is not only to extend the work to the communities included in the program, but also to furnish a wide variety of illustrations for other communities which may wish to introduce it, significant data and reports describing and interpreting the results of the demonstrations will be published after they are concluded.

PRESENT STATUS AND OUTLOOK

At the present time there are 186 visiting teachers, including those on the staff of the National Committee on Visiting Teachers, in 64 cities and 6 counties scattered through 34 states of the Union. As has already been brought out in previous national surveys of this work[1] there is considerable divergence in practice among the different communities in which it is conducted. This is but natural in a field which deals with social and educational problems involving a veritable maze of local facilities and limitations and an infinite variety of educational standards and viewpoints. One fact stands out clearly in these studies, however. Whether one considers the data compiled from the visiting teachers'

[1] See footnote to page 277.

case records or the opinions of the various school officials, social workers, and others whose judgment was sought, the fundamental purposes of the work are generally understood and the need for the service is well-nigh universally recognized.

It is also gratifying to find that, as the value of visiting teacher case work in the preventive stages of unadjustment is becoming more generally recognized, the importance of employing a similar technique in other school departments is being more fully realized, and the treatment of attendance, health, vocational guidance, and similar school problems outside the field of instruction in its restricted sense is being permeated with this awakened consciousness of the whole life of the child. The school is thus looking *out* as well as *in* for the enhancement of its purpose and is adding twenty-four-hour construction to its former five hours of instruction. It is realizing that mere presence in the flesh does not suffice when children are absent in spirit.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON VISITING TEACHERS

8 WEST 40TH STREET, NEW YORK CITY

HOWARD W. NUDD, Director, Public Education Association, New York City, *Chairman*

J. H. BEVERIDGE, Superintendent of Schools, Omaha, Nebraska

M. L. BRITTAIN, President, Georgia School of Technology, Atlanta, Georgia

EMMA G. CASE, Director of Visiting Teachers, Dept. of Education, Rochester, New York

R. G. JONES, Superintendent of Schools, Cleveland, Ohio

ANNA B. PRATT, Director, White-Williams Foundation, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

BARBARA S. QUIN, Assistant Director, Commonwealth Fund, New York City

GRAHAM ROMEYN TAYLOR, Executive Director, Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency, New York City

HENRY W. THURSTON, Department of Child Welfare, New York School of Social Work, New York City

FRANKWOOD E. WILLIAMS, M.D., Director, National Committee for Mental Hygiene, New York City

JANE F. CULBERT, Executive of the Visiting Teacher Staff, Public Education Association, New York City, *Secretary*

CENTRAL STAFF

HOWARD W. NUDD, Director
JANE F. CULBERT, Staff Executive
ETHEL B. ALLEN
EMILY L. BROWN
GRACE D. CHASE
HELEN GREGORY
AMY L. TOOKER

COMMUNITIES COOPERATING IN THE VISITING TEACHER DEMONSTRATIONS

Berkeley, California
H. B. Wilson, Superintendent of Schools
Elizabeth McMechen, Visiting Teacher

Birmingham, Alabama
C. B. Glenn, Superintendent of Schools
Rose I. Converse, Visiting Teacher

Bluefield, West Virginia
E. C. Wade, Superintendent of Schools
Grace D. Chase, Visiting Teacher

Boone County, Missouri
C. E. Northcutt, Superintendent of Schools
Janet E. Davison, Visiting Teacher

Burlington, Vermont
L. C. Hunt, Superintendent of Schools
B. C. Douglass, Dean of Education, University of Vermont
Sara M. Holbrook, Visiting Teacher and Instructor in the University

Butte, Montana
A. H. Douglass, Superintendent of Schools
Frances L. Range, Visiting Teacher

Charlotte, North Carolina
H. P. Harding, Superintendent of Schools
Roberta D. Tarpley, Visiting Teacher

Chisholm, Minnesota
J. P. Vaughan, Superintendent of Schools
Mabel Huschka, Visiting Teacher

Coatesville, Pennsylvania
H. R. Vanderslice, Superintendent of Schools
Mary P. Wolff, Visiting Teacher

COLUMBUS, Georgia
R. B. Daniel, Superintendent of Schools
Edith E. Farrell, Visiting Teacher

DETROIT, Michigan
Frank Cody, Superintendent of Schools
Abbie B. Langmaid, Visiting Teacher

DURHAM, North Carolina
Frank Martin, Superintendent of Schools
Marie Miller, Visiting Teacher

EUGENE, Oregon
J. T. Glenn, Superintendent of Schools
H. D. Sheldon, Dean of Education, University of Oregon
Theodora S. Elwell, Visiting Teacher and Instructor in the University

HURON COUNTY, Ohio
E. A. Bell, Superintendent of Schools
Elizabeth T. Alling, Visiting Teacher

HUTCHINSON, Kansas
J. W. Gowans, Superintendent of Schools
Pauline Fairchild, Visiting Teacher

KALAMAZOO, Michigan
E. H. Drake, Superintendent of Schools
Mary M. Nicolls, Visiting Teacher

LINCOLN, Nebraska
M. C. Lefler, Superintendent of Schools
Frances Piekarski, Visiting Teacher

MONMOUTH COUNTY, New Jersey
W. M. Smith, County Superintendent of Schools
E. C. Gilland, Superintendent of Schools, Red Bank, N. J.
Rhea Kay Boardman, Visiting Teacher

OMAHA, Nebraska
J. H. Beveridge, Superintendent of Schools
Natalie A. Bassett, Visiting Teacher

POCATELLO, Idaho
W. R. Siders, Superintendent of Schools
Edna L. Swingle, Visiting Teacher

Racine, Wisconsin
F. M. Longanecker, Superintendent of Schools
Gertrude V. Gath, Visiting Teacher

Richmond, Virginia
A. H. Hill, Superintendent of Schools
Ettienne Baldwin, Visiting Teacher

Rochester, Pennsylvania
S. R. Grimm, Superintendent of Schools
Lavinia T. Reed, Visiting Teacher

Rock Springs, Wyoming
O. C. Schwiering, Superintendent of Schools
Della Ryan, Visiting Teacher

San Diego, California
H. C. Johnson, Superintendent of Schools
Gladys L. Keyes, Visiting Teacher

Sioux City, Iowa
M. G. Clark, Superintendent of Schools
Elsie Ball, Visiting Teacher

Sioux Falls, South Dakota
A. A. MacDonald, Superintendent of Schools
Blanche G. Paget, Visiting Teacher

Tucson, Arizona
C. E. Rose, Superintendent of Schools
Jennie G. McGuffey, Visiting Teacher

Tulsa, Oklahoma
P. P. Claxton, Superintendent of Schools
Ethel Reynolds, Visiting Teacher

Warren, Ohio
H. B. Turner, Superintendent of Schools
Alice M. Porter, Visiting Teacher

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND PROGRAM

FOR THE

PREVENTION OF DELINQUENCY

The Commonwealth Fund initiated in 1921 a five-year Program for the Prevention of Delinquency. The purpose of this Program is to demonstrate the value and promote the wider application of modern psychiatric service and visiting teacher methods to the study and guidance of children presenting problems of behavior and other maladjustments in school and society.

Problem children, it is recognized, do not all become delinquent in subsequent life, but there is growing evidence that adult criminality has its roots in childhood in the same factors which cause early disorders of behavior. The understanding and adjustment of children whose conduct suggests underlying mental or physical difficulties should, therefore, make for the prevention not only of juvenile delinquency but of later and more serious criminal tendencies. Even when delinquency is not involved, such study and treatment of problem children should remove the cause of much unhappiness both at the time and throughout life.

The Program consists of a group of related activities made possible by grants from the Fund to four cooperating agencies each of which administers independently a division of the undertaking.

DIVISION I

New York School of Social Work, 105 East 22d St., New York

PORTER R. LEE, Director

MARION E. KENWORTHY, M.D., Medical Director

Bureau of Children's Guidance

The New York School of Social Work offers courses and fellowships for the training of psychiatric social workers, visiting teachers, and probation officers; in this connection it maintains a clinic

known as the Bureau of Children's Guidance for the study and treatment of children referred to it from schools and other sources. This clinic seeks to demonstrate thoroughly the potentialities of such treatment, and to provide opportunities for observation and field work by students in training.

DIVISION II

Division on the Prevention of Delinquency, National Committee for Mental Hygiene, 370 Seventh Avenue, New York

FRANKWOOD E. WILLIAMS, M.D., Medical Director
National Committee for Mental Hygiene.
RALPH P. TRUITT, M.D., Director
Division on the Prevention of Delinquency

The Division on the Prevention of Delinquency of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene provides demonstration psychiatric clinics in selected cities, and a field consultant service, with the object of bringing about the establishment of permanent clinics under local auspices to serve children referred by schools, social agencies, juvenile courts, and parents.

DIVISION III

National Committee on Visiting Teachers, 8 West 40th Street New York

HOWARD W. NUDD, Chairman
JANE F. CULBERT, Secretary

The National Committee on Visiting Teachers, affiliated with the Public Education Association of New York City, cooperates with local school boards of thirty communities throughout the country in providing visiting teachers, in order to demonstrate the value of such service in the adjustment of children whose scholarship, behavior, environment, or mental condition has prevented them from gaining full benefit from their school opportunities. It is hoped that permanent establishment of such service, wholly supported by the local communities, will result.

DIVISION IV

Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency
50 East 42d Street, New York

BARRY C. SMITH, Chairman
JULIA C. LATHROP
PORTER R. LEE
HENRY C. MORRISON
HOWARD W. NUDD
BARBARA S. QUIN
THOMAS W. SALMON, M.D.
MILDRED C. SCOVILLE
RALPH P. TRUITT, M.D.
FRANKWOOD E. WILLIAMS, M.D.
GRAHAM ROMEYN TAYLOR, Secretary and Executive Director

The Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency, which includes the executive heads of all Divisions of the Program, is designed to promote the unity of the entire enterprise, to coordinate its various activities, to conduct related investigations and field studies, and to interpret the purpose, methods, and results to various specially interested groups and to the public generally.

Inquiries concerning the Program may be addressed to the Executive Director of the Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency, or concerning the work of a particular Division, to the Director thereof.

DOUGLAS C. McMURTRIE NEW YORK

86185

LC
3965
.S3

Sayles, M. B.

The problem child
in school.

CARRIE RICH MEMORIAL LIBRARY
CAMPBELL COLLEGE
BUIES CREEK, N. C.

OCT 77
N. MANCHESTER,
INDIANA

CAMPBELL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
LC3965 .S3 NICC
The problem child in school; narratives
3 7497 00087331 0

W9-DFF-545